CHRIST IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

By John H. Cable, B.A., S.T.B.

MR 31 '87

A. Thomas Sleeper
from
A Brother in the Lord
Oct 1, 1934

Christ in the Four Gospels

BY

REV. JOHN H. CABLE, B. A.

Instructor at the Missionary Training Institute,

NYACK, N. Y.

UNITED THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY LIBRARY
BT
301
.C25
1926

CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE PUBLISHING CO.,
260 West 44th Street, New York, N. Y.

Copyright, 1926
CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE PUBLISHING CO.

Printed in the United States of America.

Reason vs. Revelation
- J. F. W. Farr
Reason realizes need of Revelation
Reason recognizes Revelation
Reason interprets Revelation
Reason worships in presence of Revelation

Dedicated
to my beloved Students
past and present

UNITED THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY LIBRARY

MR 31 '87

CONTENTS

	Pages
Introduction—Inter-Testament Period	1-6
Preparation for and Private Life of Christ	9-49
Beginning of the Ministry of Christ	53-73
Early Judean Ministry of Christ	77-91
Early Galilean Ministry of Christ	95-127
Later Galilean Ministry of Christ	131-209
Latest Galilean Ministry of Christ	213-234
Perean Ministry of Christ	237-280
Passion Week	280-345
Forty Days	349-366
Indexes	

PREFACE

Solomon interrupts the grand closing chapter of Ecclesiates to say "Of making many books there is no end." In spite of this oft quoted truism new books bid for recognition. Each has its occasion, its object, and usually its unique place. Solomon's observation was intended to direct the young to his own "Words of the wise" which "are as goads (to prod) and as nails (to fasten)." Said he, "By these, my son, be admonished." He warned against the distracting "many books" and the distressing "much study" with its attendant weariness. Nevertheless he considered his own latest book, written in his old age, doubtless, to be indispensable. Not every writer can honestly make such a claim for his humble contribution to the "many books." So I have no fear of being charged with an affected modesty when I state that it is with a degree of hesitancy that I submit this "Life of Christ" for publication.

The occasion of the bringing together of the material comprising this book was the teaching of the "Harmony of the Gospels." In presenting this course I used the same method as my scholarly and saintly predecessor, Dr. Henri De Vries. Lectures required "notes." And these piled up until they had became bulky and too cumbersome, for permanent use. Their cost in mimeograph form was well nigh prohibitive, yet necessary. So each succeeding class of students called for all this "in a book." Therefore my primary object in publishing these "notes" is to satisfy this demand of my appreciative and stimulating students.

However I have hope that others may be instructed and edified by the contents of the following pages, studied in conjunction with the Four Gospels. To secure the most satisfactory results "A Harmony of the Gospels" by Stevens and Burton (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York) should be used with this work. I hereby recognize my obligation to this commonly accepted "Harmony." Its outline I have followed. It was indispensable in our class-room work.

The teachings of Christ afford a mine of inexhaustible wealth. Though He spake in no cryptic terms yet, after nineteen centuries, the last word in the exegesis of His utterances has not been spoken or written. We, therefore, share the digging in this mine. Then matters geographical, historical and illustrative are introduced to provide a suitable background on the one hand or to give color to the composite picture of Christ on the other.

Many authorities have been consulted and quoted, often at what might appear undue length. But why not gather boquets from others' gardens and tie them with one's own string? As frequent quotation shows "The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah" by Edersheim was ever at hand. Geike, Farrar, Simpson, Blaikie, Seely, Papini, Wilson and scores of others have placed the author under obligation by the merit of their works.

From the New Testament, English and Greek, I have harvested; from others I have gleaned. Share my store.

JOHN H. CABLE.

Nyack, N. Y.
Aug. 27, 1926.

Christ in the Four Gospels

INTRODUCTION

Inter-Testament Period

The silence of four hundred years between the Old Testament record and that of the New is broken only by Josephus, the Apocrypha, and notices of Greek and Latin historians. (Josephus, a Jew born at Jerusalem A. D. 37, in A. D. 93 published in "Greek Antiquities of the Jew," a complete history from creation. His "The History of the Jewish War" gives an account of the nation from B. C. 170 to his own time. Josephus exaggerated to make his nation seem great. The Apocryphal Books cannot be placed in the canon of Scripture yet they contain considerable valuable information.)

These four centuries witnessed the fall of Persia, the rise and fall of Greece or Macedonia, and the rise of Rome. These three great world empires are of interest to us as Bible scholars because they so intimately touched Jewish life and were potent factors in making Jewish history. Daniel, both by the Image of the Man, as seen by Nebuchadnezzar, and also by the recording of his own Beast Visions predicted as well as described these empires. (See Dan. 2 : 31, 32, 33 and context; 7 : 1-23.)

Professor Blaikie in his Manual of Bible History divides the history of Palestine into six sections, "corresponding to the different masters whose sway it owned."

1. The Persians were its nominal masters to the year B. C. 333.

2. Alexander the Great conquered it in that year and was its master for ten years.

3. On his death (B. C. 323) it fell, after a long contest, under the Ptolemys, or Macedonian kings of Egypt, and so remained for over 100 years to B. C. 204.

4. Then it came under the Macedonian kingdom of Syria, till it was set free by the Maccabees, B. C. 163.

5. Ruled by the Maccabees for another century, till —.

6. The Roman general Pompey conquered it (B. C. 63), and made it tributary to Rome.

Time would not permit, nor is it within the scope of this course to cover the rule of Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, or even the Maccabees, over Palestine. However the two last we shall roughly sketch. Alexander's successors in Syria and Egypt, kings of "the north" and "the south" of Daniel 11, recognized in Palestine and Coele-Syria a bone of contention. Finally in the Battle of Raphia, near Gaza, Ptolemy conquered Antiochus and resolved to visit the holy of holies in the temple after the battle. He withstood the high priest who resisted his encroachment upon the sanctuary, but is said to have been seized with confusion and terror, and so retreated and abandoned his purpose.

Ptolemy was then enraged at the Jews and upon his return to Alexandria persecuted them severely. Having resolved to make a spectacle of them, he assembled Jews from all parts of Egypt into the hippodrome, made elephants drunk with wine mingled with frankincense, and turned them upon the Jews, but the brutes vented their rage upon the unhappy spectators, killing many of them. Then the king, alarmed at God's interposition for the Jews, recalled his persecuting edicts. He soon died, leaving an infant of five years as his successor. Antiochus of Syria embraced the opportunity to seize Palestine. Later he was murdered.

We pass to the "dark and troubled era"—the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. Epiphanes means "Illustrious" but, says Blaikie, he "was illustrious only for the grossness of his character and the wickedness of his conduct." He wrested the office of high priest from Onias and gave it to his unprincipled brother Jason for 360 talents. Upon hearing that the Jews rejoiced over a false report of his death, he slew 40,000 of them and sold a like number as slaves. He showed his contempt for the Jewish religion by entering the holy of holies, sacrificing a sow on the altar of burnt offering and sprinkling broth made from its flesh all

over the building. When later aggravated he had men slaughtered in their synagogues, carried women and children off as slaves and demolished Jerusalem. This put an end to Jewish sacrifices for three and a half years, or until Judas Maccabæus recovered and purged the temple.

Antiochus Epiphanes *proscribed the Jewish Faith.* "The temple at Jerusalem was forcibly consecrated to the Grecian Jove and the statue of Jupiter Olympus was erected on the altar of burnt offering." Women and the children which they had circumcised were cast headlong over the city walls. Jews were forced to participate in the abominations of the feast of Bacchus. Thus Antiochus aimed to eradicate the Jewish faith.

But God always has His man ready for the emergency. A family of the priestly class called Asmonæans or Maccabees stemmed the tide of blasphemous tyranny. Maccabees is said to have been derived from the initials of the words which comprised the motto which Judas, one of the family, placed on his standard; Ex. 15:11, "Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Lord?" In Hebrew MI CAMOKA BAELIM JEHOVAH; from M C B I was derived the name. *Matthias, the father, and five sons shared the same spirit of unwillingness to submit to pagan worship.* Collecting an army of like-minded persons, Matthias retired to the mountains of Judea and from the caves occupied by David 1,000 years before, bade defiance to Antiochus. The Jews resolved to resist even on Sabbath.

Martyrdom was preferred to death by those who were Maccabean in spirit. Eleazer, a principal scribe, suffered torture and death rather than eat swine's flesh. A mother and her seven sons were commanded to eat the same detested food. Rather than comply each successively had his tongue cut out, his fingers and toes removed and was cast into a large vessel on a fire. The valiant mother was the last to suffer this horrible fate, but not until she had spurred on her sons to faithfulness by words of exhortation and cheer.

The temple was cleansed and rededicated and services resumed.

But Judas was beset again by the Syrians and so he ap-

pealed to Rome. Pompey, of the first Triumvirate, took the city when opposed by Aristobulus, a Maccabean descendant. Pompey unwisely entered the holy of holies of the temple, and so outraged the feelings of the Jews. Hyrcanus, a Maccabean, was given the government of Judea but denied the crown.

This was a stormy time in the city of David the Great King. Religion was at a low ebb. Sadducees opposed Pharisees on the matter of traditions. Says Blaikie, "Now, as formerly, true piety probably flourished like the ferns and the mosses of our mountains, in shady nooks and in lonely dells. Little of it can be discovered in the leaders of factions, or in any of the men who occupied prominent positions. The rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley must be sought for in more quiet and sequestered spots."

Roman Influence

When Pompey was killed in Egypt, Cæsar, who ruled the empire alone, made Hyrcanus king at Jerusalem, but he appointed Antipater, an Idumæan, procurator of Judea under Hyrcanus. Antipater's two sons, Phasælus and *Herod* (afterwards the *Great*) were made governors of Judea and Galilee. Antipater was poisoned the next year. Julius Cæsar was assassinated three years later.

Herod's Rise

The new triumvirs were Octavius, Antony and Lepidus. Antony received Syria and the East. Antony favored Herod. Phasælus died. Herod married Marianna, the beautiful granddaughter of Hyrcanus, the Maccabean. About this time Antigonus, son of Aristobulus, had the ears of Hyrcanus cut off so that he could not serve as high priest. Herod then went to Rome and persuaded Antony to give him the office and dignity of king. Antigonus was put to death and the Maccabean rule with him ceased forever.

Herod is described as *"crafty, clever and cruel."* He busied himself destroying all of those related to the Maccabees lest one of them would seize his throne. Aristobulus, brother of his wife, was invited to his residence at Jericho

where while bathing he was choked to death by one of Herod's officers holding his head under the water in pretence of sport. Then Hyrcanus was inveigled to go to Jerusalem, where he was put to death in his eightieth year. Then Marianne, his wife, alienated from Herod by the untimely death of her male relatives, fell under suspicion and was executed by her unconscionable husband's orders. Then Herod grew remorseful, more and more cruel, suspicious and vindictive and left a bloody murderous record.

Herod, unpopular with the Jews because he was an Idumæan (descendent of Esau-Edom) and on account of his trail of blood, resolved to win their favor by material improvements. So he built an amphitheater and a theater for the amusement of the people at Jerusalem. Samaria he rebuilt. On Mount Zion he erected a magnificent palace for himself. He built a great seaport, Cæsarea. His chief improvement was the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem. He had incurred Jewish displeasure by building a temple of white marble in honor of Cæsar Augustus at Peneas at the sources of the Jordan. Hence the rebuilding of the temple of the Jews was a politic move. The second temple had stood about 500 years and so time and sieges had worsted it. Jewish mistrust of Herod made it necessary to arrange for all the materials being on the ground before the old temple was torn down. There were employed 1,000 wagons, 10,000 workmen and 1,000 priests skilled in architecture. In ten years the temple was dedicated, but many men were employed for years afterwards, giving grounds for the remark of the Jews, "Forty and six years was the temple in building."

After this Herod, overcome again by suspicion, had his two sons strangled. Many others suspected of conspiracy were put to death. When we recount how cheaply Herod held human life we quite well understand his wholesale murder of all the babes of Bethlehem in order to get rid of the infant Jesus.

Yet all this monstrous conduct of Herod and all other vicissitudes of Israel did not "alter their religious views or shake their confidence." Israel had weathered other storms besides that of Herod. Had they not passed through

Egypt? Had they not broken through the impious heathenish straits of Antiochus Epiphanes?

(Note: Page 1 of the second set of notes to be studied here.)

PART I

The Thirty Years of Private Life

THE THIRTY YEARS OF PRIVATE LIFE

§ 1. Prologue of John's Gospel. John 1: 1-18.

This section strictly speaking is not a part of the narrative of Christ's earthly life. Apparently John wished to oppose false ideas of God and "the uniqueness and all-sufficiency of the revelation of God in Christ." False conceptions of God's relation to the world made it likely that some would be led away from faith in Christ as Mediator between God and man. The theory of the inherent evil of matter caused many to believe that God never created it nor could He have anything to do with it directly but only through intermediate being or beings. A favorite name for these intermediate beings was *"Word."*

Those most likely to succumb to this false teaching were the Jews of the Western dispersion who had become Hellenized or Grecianized. These Jews revered a life of lofty thought and study of the law, but did not believe they could attain unto it. It was sacred, but like the soil of Palestine unattainable. In the West Greek ideas were "in the air." Greek intellect penetrated everywhere, and the Jews came under its sway. Doubtless the Jew was proud of his own community and satisfied by it, but the leaven of Greek thinking Hellenized all about it. Hellenic criticism could not be silenced, nor its searching light extinguished by the breath of a Rabbi. He must argue. And why not, since he had truth on his side? But it was a *truth of authority.* He had not "thought it out." In the process he had to encounter the questions of his own mind as he "meditated" and penetrated into the Divine mysteries. Hence the Jew gave attention to the intellectual view of the Scriptures—their philosophical understanding in the light of Grecian thought and criticism. They looked for depths beneath the surface scripture text. There was a tendency to divest the stories of the Old Testament of their nationalistic garb, to "idealize the individualism of the persons introduced" and hence have truth for all times and peoples. These Grecianized

Jews believed that truth was truth regardless of its source and so granted that heathen sages were God-taught or that inspiration was of degree rather than of kind. Their "mental consciousness" answered to intellectual truth just as "conscience answered to moral truth or duty." Added to this was the influence of the "time-spirit," which rules thinking and doing. Curiosity had been aroused and Greek learning was sought in spite of bans and prohibitions. "A young Rabbi, Ben Dama, asked his uncle whether he might not study Greek philosophy since he had mastered the 'law' . . . the older replied by a reference to Joshua 1 : 8, 'Go seek what is the hour which is neither of the day nor of the night, and in it thou mayest study Greek philosophy.' " Yet the Jewish Patriarch, Gamaliel II, studied Greek though the elder Gamaliel felt so keenly the wrong of possessing a Targum on Job in Aramæan that he buried it deep underground. To offset the tendency a ban was pronounced on all who studied "Greek wisdom." Yet in spite of this suspicion of all that was Greek, that language inevitably found a prominent place among Jewish peoples. Translation was made of the Pentateuch under the patronage of Ptolemy II, who was said to be "literally book mad," so keen was he for literature. Naturally the other books of the Old Testament were translated successively and evidently the LXX was completed while Ptolemy III reigned (247 to 221 B. C.). The LXX was in the language of the people, and it was urged that it was inspired like the original, just as some people of our day insist on the inerrancy of the King James' version. As a matter of fact the LXX was colored by Greek thought.

In order to understand what John was guarding against in his prologue let us briefly consider "the greatest of uninspired Jewish writers of old." For thus Edersheim describes *Philo,* the wealthy aristocratic Jew of Alexandria, who "completed Jewish Hellenism." He it was who combined heathen philosophy and the Jewish faith.

Philo was saturated with classical modes of expression and both alludes to and quotes scores of Greek writers. He was familiar with Homer, Heslod, Pindar, Solon, Plato and others, and scarcely could think of Pythagoras, Plato, Aris-

totle and the Stoics as "heathen." To him Plato was "the great." Yet above all these he placed Moses, from whom he believed all sages had learned. But much was found *under* the holy Scriptures rather than *in* them. He recognized both a *literal* and an *allegorical interpretation.* The Biblical personages were indeed historical characters yet, to him, "the allegorical interpretation gave the true sense, even though it might occasionally run counter to the letter." Thus "the killing of the Egyptian by Moses, represented the subjugation of passion, etc."

Philo set aside the literal meaning of the Scripture when it implied anything unworthy of the Deity. Since he believed in the separation of God and matter he accounted for miracles and interpositions by sometimes allegorizing and again rationistically explaining them. He could not admit of any direct contact between God and creation. So he completed his system by resorting to emanations from God. He had "Potencies" (dynameis), "Words" (logoi), as intermediate powers. They were *Potencies* when thought of as the power of God. They were *Words* when considered as expressing God to and through His creation. Strange yet true it is that although Philo conceived of the "Word" as helping him to reconcile his system of Jewish faith and Greek philosophy yet his definition of "Word" is not clear, as Edersheim in his scholarly way shows. When we consider the "Preparation of the Ancient World for Christianity" we observe that Heathenism prepared "philosophically" for Christ's Coming by demonstrating that the human mind was utterly unable to solve the problems of the universe and life. Before the phenomena of nature man stood baffled. The Greek attempted a solution. But he was keen rather than deep. His sounding line was too short. His telescope was not suited to the far-reaching problems all around him. Yet he ventured and drew some conclusions. These results were taken seriously by Philo and others and attempts were made to reconcile them with revelation. But the ass and the ox did not make good yoke-fellows. Oil and water did not mix. Philo's "Word" was meaningless because it designated nothing real. John in his prologue tells of a real "Word."

John takes the term used by Philo and puts a new meaning into it. There is the same form but a new substance. "God is not afar off, unrecognizable by man, without properties, without name. He is the Father. Instead of a nebulous reflection of the Deity we have the Person of the Logos; not a Logos with the two potencies of goodness and power, but full of grace and truth. . . . John strikes the pen through Alexandrianism when he lays it down as the fundamental fact of New Testament history that 'the Logos was made flesh' just as Paul does when he proclaims the great mystery of 'God manifest in the flesh.'"

Philo and his school were "feeling after God if haply they might find HIM." John showed them God in Christ.

Campbell Morgan has given a well wrought out and most suggestive outline for John's Prologue. I submit it with other appropriate matter recognizing where I quote:

I.—John 1:1

1. "No man hath seen God."
   a. In the beginning was the Word.
   b. The Word was with God.
   c. The Word was God.

II.—John 1:14

2. "Son hath declared Him."
   a. The Word became flesh.
   b. The Word dwelt among us.
   c. The Word was full of grace and truth.

III.—John 1:18

"I" speaks of the eternal, heavenly, divine "Word" as identical with God.

"II" speaks of that same "Word" coming to earth incarnate and as being completely satisfying and real.

"III" sums up or briefly states "I" and "II." God beyond the vision of man has been brought to "plain view" by Jesus.

Dr. Brooke Foss Westcott in his "An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," p. 17, says: *"The history of Christ is concrete doctrine, as doctrine is abstract history.*

The Christian finds in the records of the Lord's life a perfect pattern for his own guidance as well as the realization of the Apostolic Teaching." This says two things; viz., that Christ made concrete, or wrote, in terms that man can understand, the will of God (the mind, thought or ideals of God), and that man can find in a study of Christ's life a standard of his own, as the apostles taught. Herein we see a practical advantage in studying the Gospels, the story of that matchless life. Herein we see an attainable life, an ideal life. Says Westcott further, "The fundamental error of the most pious of the ancient philosophers lay in their misapprehension of the relation of the finite to the infinite. They sought a system of absolute truth, independent of the specific laws of human life and vainly labored to raise men out of the world. They had *no gospel for the simple and poor, for the mechanic and the slave.* . . . They cherished and set forth one part of man's nature to the destruction of the others . . . Christ . . . fixed the idea of spiritual life in the harmonious combination of faith and works, and left His disciples in the world though not of it." Christ came to reveal God to man as well as to manifest a case of God being in man. He "dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." He exemplified a satisfactory life. He combined all the elements of the divine and the human, the infinite and the finite. His was a revelation of what God intended in man, filled with His spirit. He showed reality.

§ 2. Preface of Luke's Gospel. Luke 1: 1-4.

Luke, the writer of the third Gospel, gives us the portrait of the Lord Jesus as a *man.* He reveals His humanity and His sympathy. He shows in Christ what Tennyson expressed in his well-known couplet—

> "Thou seemest human and divine,
> The highest, holiest manhood thou."

As Matthew wrote to and for the Jews, and Mark the Romans, so Luke wrote to and for the benefit of the Greeks, who conceived their mission to be that of perfecting man. It is well known that the Greeks carried this so far that they worshipped man. Luke portrayed to them One who was worthy of their worship.

Of Luke Salltau says, "Very little is known of him." He is generally supposed to have been a Gentile by birth, and therefore a "proselyte of the gate." He is mentioned in only three places, namely, Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11, and Philemon 24. The first mention of his connection with the Apostle Paul is indicated in Acts 16:10 by the use of the word *"we."*

Eusebius says that he was probably a Greek born at Antioch, educated in Greek literature and medicine, a physician, reporter, editor and literary man. Tradition adds that he also was a painter.

His Gospel was written between 63 and 66 A. D.

Dr. A. B. Simpson in his "Christ in the Bible," commenting on Colossians 4:14, says, "Herein we find a man in professional life rising above and reaching beyond his professional duties, and accomplishing the noblest service for God and man. For Luke became the friend of Paul, the author of one of the most beautiful and valuable of the Gospels, and the chronicler of the history of the Early Church. So God loves to use men in unconventional ways. The need of the Church today is not a larger number of ordained clergymen, but a larger number of men and women in social, secular and professional life whose entire influence and talents are at the service of the Master; not a salaried and dependent priesthood who preach the Gospel because it is expected of them merely, but a great body of consecrated irregulars, Nehemiahs, Josephs, Esthers, Daniels, who use their earthly station in the providence of God as a standpoint from which to serve and witness for their heavenly Master, and bless their fellowmen."

Luke 1:1. "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand," etc. Luke's prologue is a study. Godet says, "Not only is it written in the most classical Greek, but it reminds us by its contents of the similar preambles of the most illustrious Greek historians, especially those of Herodotus and Thucydides." It betrays a delicate sentiment and a refined mind such as were characteristic of the Greek character. There is a modesty in Luke's prologue which is admirable. Luke, though evidently possessing great ability, placed himself among men of the second order. He excuses his bold-

ness of undertaking such a work by the fact that *many* had undertaken what he was doing. Godet holds that only in the Acts and the Epistle to the Hebrews do we find a style like that of Luke's gospel. "These things which are most surely believed among us." Luke was certain of his matter. He wrote in no *doubtful disputation,* but rather things that were most surely believed or, as some translate it, "the things which were performed"; i. e., which Christ and His apostles had done. May we not today rejoice that the doctrine which Christians hold is what thousands of the wisest and best of men have *ventured their souls upon?*

2. "Eye witnesses and ministers of the word." Luke had access to materials which he received from those who had seen for themselves. These not only witnessed but became servants of the Lord Jesus Christ and so ministered this Gospel to others.

3. "It seemed good to me also." Luke does not profess any more knowledge than his predecessors. He acknowledges that he belongs to the second generation and hence was dependent upon the narrative of the apostles. "Having had a perfect understanding of all things from the first—," this scholarly man did not rest upon nor write mere tradition, but acquainted himself with the facts necessary to the writing of his Gospel. As Henry puts it, "He wrote his history as Moses wrote his,—of things *reported* by tradition and *ratified* by inspiration." "Most excellent Theophilus." Here is something unique. Luke dedicated his Gospel as one has indicated, not to a patron but to a pupil. He was not so eager to have reputation given to his work as that someone might be edified by it. There are those who prefer to believe that Theophilus, meaning as it does "lover of God," refers to any Christian rather than to some particular individual. Origen supposed that Theophilus was a purely fictitious person, but the best scholarship will not allow this. There is some traditional information about this person found in the "Clementine Recognitions." According to this Theophilus was at the head of all the men of power at Antioch, consecrated under the name of the Church. He was, therefore, some great lord residing in the capital of Syria. Acording to this

theory Luke may have been a freed man of the house of Theophilus. Good authorities so believe, and that Luke was freed by Theophilus and practiced as a physician in Antioch, where he was converted about the time of the founding of the church in Antioch and so became acquainted with Paul and decided to accompany him on a mission. This would account for his rejoining Paul at Troas before Paul went into Macedonia as Acts 16 records. The expression "Most excellent" Paul used when he addressed Festus, the governor (Acts 26:25). These two instances suggest to us that religion should not be divorced from civility and good manners, but rather should find us giving honor to whom honor is due.

4. "Know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." Evidently Theophilus had been instructed prior to baptism, or subsequent thereto, and possibly by Luke himself. But since Luke recognized him as a man of quality and perhaps noble birth, he took great pains to fortify Theophilus against temptation by writing to him in detail, just as ministers should provide their congregations with reasons for the hope that is in them.

§ 3. The Two Genealogies. Mat. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38.

As we examine the two genealogies it becomes evident that Matthew's is that through Joseph while Luke's is that through Mary, as we will show. Such passages as Psalm 132:11, Luke 1:32, and Romans 1:3 make it necessary that Mary be a descendant of David. The Jews would accept no Messiah who did not have a "right" to sit on David's throne.

Matthew Henry writing on Christ's "pedigree," says "Matthew designed to show that Christ was the son of Abraham, in whom *all the families of the earth are blessed,* and that he was heir to the throne of David; and therefore he begins with Abraham and brings the genealogy down to Jacob who was the father of Joseph, and heir-male of the house of David; but Luke designing to show that Christ was the *seed of the woman,* that should break the serpent's head, traces his pedigree upward as high as

Adam, and begins it with Eli, or Heli, who was the father, not of Joseph, but of the Virgin Mary."

Henry further states "Matthew draws the pedigree from Solomon, whose natural line, ending in Jechonias, the legal rite was transferred to Salathiel, who was of the house of Nathan, another son of David, which line Luke here pursues and so leaves out all the kings of Judah. . . . The evangelists copied the genealogies out of the heralds' books; and in them they found the pedigree of Jacob, the father of Joseph, to be as it is set down in Matthew; and the pedigree of Heli, the father of Mary, to be as it is set down here in Luke."

Jerome Travis by means of his copyrighted "Harmony of Matthew and Luke's Genealogies" (which is shown in excellent diagram form) makes clear that Bathsheba bore to King David both Solomon and Nathan, 1 Chron. 3:5), and that through Solomon Matthew traces Joseph's descent, while through Nathan Luke traces the line of descent to Mary. Says Travis, "Heli was the *father* of Mary and *father-in-law* of Joseph. Joseph was Heli's son-in-law and *by the usage of that age* would be called his son as in Luke 3:23." Early Christian writers agreed that Mary was the daughter of Heli and this the Talmud, the Jewish book of law and tradition, confirmed.

"The difference in the number of the generations given in the two Gospels is explained by the fact that with the Jews it was customary to name only the most important or noted persons in a family line. . . . Luke, writing for the Greeks, gives a more complete genealogy."—*Travis.*

§ 4. Birth of John the Baptist Promised. Luke 1: 5-25.

The student, hungry for the historical setting of "the days of Herod, king of Judea," would do well to ponder the well written pages of "Manual of Bible History" by Professor Blaikie (T. Nelson & Sons) who gives a vivid picture of the period in Judea.

He portrays the aged priest Zacharias, traveling slowly along the road from Hebron to Jerusalem, noting with mournful feeling the palace of Herod on Mount Zion where

King David had dwelt, sighing heavily as he makes obeisance to the cruel Idumean, the stern, shrewd Roman governor who occupies the place once graced by the gentle, pious, fatherly David or Josiah. So many changes have been made in Jerusalem, works of Herod, which have profaned the Holy City. Has he not even built, near the base of Mount Zion, the circus or hippodrome, for horse and chariot racing? And the presence of two stupendous buildings, the theater and the amphitheater, indicate the introduction of gladiatorial fights and other savage sports.

All about Jerusalem is foreign. The language is different. One hears no longer Hebrew, but a mixture of Syriac and Chaldee from the Hebrews; most speak Greek; military men speak the language of Rome. The Jewish religion consists of formality, legality and traditionalism. The old spirit is no more. Surely the glory of the Lord hath departed.

But for Zacharias the day dawns. As he offers incense to God Gabriel, who had appeared to Daniel five hundred years before, comes to him and promises him a son. As a token of the reality of this promise Zacharias is struck dumb until John is born.

I. Birth Foretold (8-22)

8. "While he executed the priest's office." The priest daily offered sacrifice and attended to the ceremonies of the temple. "In the order of his course." There were twenty-four courses of priests and his was the eighth.

9. "His lot was to burn incense." Each priest in each course was determined by lot; some were to kill the sacrifice, others to sprinkle the blood and yet others to burn the incense, etc. Abbott tells us that the lot was cast each week when the members of the course met in a room in the temple for that purpose. The golden altar of incense stood within the temple proper by the veil which separated it from the Holy of Holies. The Cambridge Bible tells us that there are said to have been *twenty thousand priests* in the days of Christ, and so it could never fall to the same priest to twice offer incense. If Zacharias had not had the vision extraordinary, this would yet have been the most

memorable day in his life. The incense composed of fragrant spices (Ex. 20:34-38) symbolized prayer.

10. "Multitude . . . were praying without." The people stood in the temple courts silent in worship. When the incense of the morning and night burned, the worshippers with their faces toward the holy spot where the symbol of their devotions arose in fragrant clouds, prayed. They hoped that even as the incense ascended to the nostrils of Jehovah so their prayers might ascend to Him and that the latter would be just as acceptable as the former was odorous. "Time of incense," 9 a. m. or 3 p. m.

11. "There appeared . . . an angel." "This appearance is the first note in that overture of angels which introduced Christ to the world."—*Abbott.* This was the first message of God given to man recorded in the Bible for four hundred years; that is, since the days of Malachi.

13. "Fear fell upon him." We can imagine this fear was a holy awe. When the human heart is face to face with an unknown power, there is always alarm or awe.

13. "Thy prayer is heard." Zacharias had prayed that he might have a son and that the kingdom of God might come. The child that was about to be promised to him was the realization of the answer to prayer to both. "Call his name John." "The grace of Jehovah." "The gracious gift of Jehovah." The very name that the child was to receive was indicative of the message that the Lord was to proclaim through John.

14. "Joy and gladness." Gladness may be thought of as the expression of an inward experience, joy. "Many shall rejoice at his birth." Not only the parents, but all who would receive the benefit of his message and ministry.

15. "Shall be *great* in the sight of the Lord." Godet says that this greatness was that which results from personal holiness and the moral authority accompanying it. It was spiritual greatness; not simply outward pompousness. "And shall neither drink wine nor strong drink." He was to be a Nazarite (Num. 6:1-5), that he might be an example of holiness, consecration and self-control to the world. The Nazarites evidently raised the standard of self-control. "Filled with the Holy Ghost." No one can

do the work of the Lord acceptably unless he is baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit alone can come the needed light, power, wisdom and strength of character necessary for the work of the Lord.

16. "Many . . . shall turn to the Lord." When John came upon the scene, he found many of the Israelites living lives of sin and rebellion against the Lord God. He preached repentance and righteousness and called men back to the God of Israel.

17. "He shall go before *him.*" Evidently the prophecy here is relative to the coming of Christ. John was destined to precede the Messiah that he might be a forerunner to Him. "The spirit and power of Elias." The Jews gathered from Malachi that Elijah would visibly return to earth to announce the coming of the Messiah. Jesus explained the meaning of Malachi and showed that John came as did the prophet Elijah, as a great righteous and moral reformer and a strong one in rebuking sin. "Turn the hearts of the fathers to the children." Abbott suggests that this is to be taken figuratively and means that the hearts of the fathers, that is, the Israelites, were turned to the Gentiles, the children. This verse is suggestive of the importance of the work among the children. One has said that the devil is always suggesting that the minister should give his strength to old folks and let the children be cared for by somebody else.

18. "I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years." Just as Abraham and Sarah doubted the Lord when it had been announced to them that Isaac was to be born, so Zacharias doubted the possibility of a child being born when they were so well advanced in years. Zacharias, like most people, was slow to believe that the Lord is the God of the miraculous.

19. "I am Gabriel." Gabriel means the hero of God. "Sent . . . to show thee these glad tidings." Gabriel was officially sent by the Lord and hence the message was not of his own making, but was given to him. What a great honor and joy to be a messenger of the Lord Jehovah!

20. "Dumb . . . because thou believest not my words." This was an actual case of inability to speak without doubt

because of doubt. How many people today are silent so far as speaking for the Lord is concerned simply because they are not inclined to accept the message of the Lord.

22. "They perceived that he had seen a vision." The fact that he could not speak was proof to them that something extraordinary had happened in the temple. This unusual condition was necessary to persuade Zacharias and those about him that the Lord was surely working. The attention of people is always arrested by the miraculous.

II. Conception (24, 25)

24. "After those days . . . Elisabeth conceived." In spite of her advanced years and the unbelief that had filled the mind of Zacharias, yet the Lord was working out His sure purpose.

25. "The Lord . . . take away my reproach." It was a reproach among the Jews for a woman to go childless. It was also considered a great honor and evidence of great blessing for a child to be born.

§ 5. The Annunciation to Mary. Luke 1: 26-38.

1. The Virgin Who Became Mother of the Lord

a. Her name was Mary, meaning *exalted,* and highly favored she was above all other daughters of Israel.

b. Daughter of a royal family, descended from David, she was known to be *of the house of David.* The care of the Jews had preserved their genealogies, for Messiah was to be born and this expectation made it worth while to keep the record.

c. She was a *virgin,* espoused to one of the royal line, yet of low estate. "Christ's mother was a virgin," says Henry, "because He was to be born not by ordinary generation but miraculously . . . he must partake of the nature of man yet not of the corruption of that nature." Yet His mother was espoused so as not to cast a reflection on the holy ordinance of marriage.

d. She was from Nazareth, a city of Galilee, in a far off corner of the country. Since it was near Gentile ter-

ritory it was called *Galilee of the Gentiles.* Dr. Lightfoot notes that Jonah was of Galilee and Elijah and Elisha conversant there—all prophets. It is characteristic of Luke's Gospel that a record should be given of Jesus coming from a region of the Gentiles since he was "Son of man."

2. The Angelic Address

"Hail, thou—etc.," v. 28

a. *Appreciation of herself,—dignity.* Mary's conception out of wedlock threw her open to the suspicion of her community. Only the recollection of the angelic greeting could bolster up her spirits and keep her fit for her solemn duties and extraordinary privilege.

b. Expectation of great news.

(a) Mary was magnified and dignified. "Thou art highly favored." Even above Eve was she honored. The Latin has it *gratia plena,*—full of grace.

(b) She had God with her (v. 28). A consciousness of being on God's side makes for *stability* and courage.

cf. Judges 6:12. Gideon's modesty required such a visitation as would assure him of God's presence that he might cut down his army from *32,000* to *300* and then encounter 135,000.

cf. Isa. *7:14.* This Scripture given to (cf. § 6) Joseph was likely by him whispered to Mary, and they together rested on it as we today sing and recite "John, three, sixteen."

(c) She had God's peculiar blessing. cf. v. 48 and Judges 5:24. We note in Mary a yieldedness to God's will. She said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

In his "Studies in Church History," Dr. Pardington notes, "With reference to the Virgin Mary perhaps Protestants have gone to the other extreme of neglecting her claims to *just veneration.* It is well to remember that she is pronounced 'blessed among women'; while of herself she declared, 'from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.'"

Protestants have gone to *"the other extreme,"* referred to above because Romanists have not only worshipped but interceded Mary. Rev. H. G. Crisman, a Christian and Missionary Alliance missionary in Ecuador, related that a work of art in that country represented the pit filled with suffering souls; on either side of this place of torments was a ladder leading out. At the head of one ladder stood Mary eagerly reaching down to assist the wretched ones to freedom; while at the head of the other ladder was Jesus repelling the weak, exhausted efforts of the luckless victims. Such a warped unscriptural conception appeals to the ignorant Roman Catholic and prejudices him against our Saviour and in favor of Mary.

But as to Mary's place among women let Rev. Edward J. Russell speak, "To what woman do you and I today look as the noblest of her kind? To what woman do we look with supreme gratitude and reverence? Is it to Deborah, the Hebrew heroine, who led the forces of Israel to victory when men skulked in their tents? Is it Joan of Arc, the stainless maid of France, or to Queen Elizabeth, a masterful monarch: to 'George Eliot,' peer of any man that has written an English novel? Is it to Julia Ward Howe, who has given us the finest battle-song ever written, or Frances Willard, whose fire-filled personality has done more than any man has ever done to undermine the power of the liquor traffic? For my part I look to one closer than any of these. But who is the most famous of all women today? What woman has appeared most largely in art? What woman, rightly or wrongly, has been the greatest influence in religion? There can be no doubt that it is she who in the spirit of prophecy exclaimed, 'All generations shall call me blessed.' "

§ 6. Annunciation to Joseph. Mat. 1: 18-25.

Matthew Henry says, "The mystery of Christ's incarnation is to be adored, not pried into." The development of any fœtus is a wonder (Eccles. 11: 5), much more that of our Saviour in the virgin's womb. It has been suggested that possibly when David wrote Psalm 139: 13-16 he was speaking of Christ's incarnation.

This section records the marriage of the Virgin Mary to Joseph. It is noteworthy that Christ was conceived of a betrothed virgin in order that by this marriage might be truly reckoned as honorable. Evidently also this arrangement was a protection to Mary. As one has said, it was better that Jesus be known as "son of a carpenter" rather than as "son of a harlot." Joseph was a great assistance to Mary in many practical ways.

It appears that Joseph became aware of the state of pregnancy after Mary returned from her three months visit with Elisabeth (Luke 1:56). When Joseph discovered it others did also and we can easily imagine the suspicion in respect to Mary. Her dignified position exposed her to accusations of crime.

Verse nineteen expresses Joseph's conclusion after a time of perplexity. Henry conjectures that he struggled between the rage of jealousy and affection. His decision to put her away *privily* indicates his clemency. cf. Deut. 22: 23, 24 and Gen. 38:24. Had he exposed her it might easily have been justified as a "public example" case. Yet such "rigor of the law is sometimes the height of injustice." He exercised the principle expressed by Peter, "Love covers a multitude of sins."

While Joseph was nonplused there came to him a dream (vs. 20, 21). In it he was reminded of his relationship to David that he might remember that he was of the royal line and hence could be more easily persuaded because of Messianic hope. His *fears* are silenced. Being suspicious of the conduct of his espoused he naturally would fear the opprobium connected with her name.

So Joseph learned that Mary had conceived by the Holy Ghost according to Heb. 10:5, Gal. 4:4, and 1 Cor. 15: 47. Being born of the "seed of woman" (Gen. 3:15) He escaped the "corruption and pollution" of man. His name Jesus indicates His work as *Saviour*. Jesus is the same as Joshua of the Old Testament. There are two Joshuas; one was *Israel's Captain,* who led across the Jordan and on into Canaan; the other was Israel's Priest (Zech. 6: 11, 12). So Jesus was the Captain of our salvation and the High Priest of our profession.

This conception was in keeping with the prophecy of Isaiah 7. 14.

This was part of that "mystery of godliness" of which Paul wrote (1 Tim. 3 : 16). "In the volume of the book" it had been written of Christ and He responded, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10 : 7). Of this last passage Graham Scroggie affirms that it is "The greatest utterance of the Bible." So what was made clear to Joseph by the dream should have been believed by all who knew Isaiah's prophecy; viz., that "a virgin should be with child." And a spotless virgin Mary was (Luke 1 : 34) suited to give birth to Immanuel, the Mediator between God and man. He through this marvelous incarnation became the Daysman. He could "lay hand on both" God and man.

As verse 24 indicates, evidently Joseph speedily and cheerily married Mary. Then he lived with her that exemplary life (verse 25) so that when they went to enroll (Luke 2 : 5) it is said that she was his "betrothed." Some have inferred from this that they were not yet married, but Edersheim explains this apparent contradiction of Mat. 1 : 24 and Luke 2 : 5 by noting that legally she was his "wife" yet actually she was as a "betrothed." Jerome argued for the *perpetual virginity* of Mary, but Mat. 1 : 25—"till she had brought forth a son"—clearly is against any such ascetic notion. Whitby cites Ex. 21 : 10 as a statement of what might be expected in this as in all marriages. Of course those who hold to the "perpetual virginity" theory believe that Joseph had been married once before.

§ 7. Mary's Visit to Elisabeth. Luke 1: 39-56.

Mary, being younger and in a better physical condition for travel than Elisabeth, covered the scores of miles to be with her cousin. Henry is of the opinion that she sought "Leisure and help for devotion in the priest's family" at Hebron (Josh. 21 : 10, 11).

Dr. Lightfoot conjectures that Christ was *there to be* conceived. Shiloh of Judah should be conceived in a city of Judah. There came the promise to Isaac; there was circumcision instituted; there Abraham owned his first land

and David wore his first crown. Here lay Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah and, antiquity holds, Adam and Eve. Henry supports the notion that Christ was conceived in Hebron by reference to Luke 1: 45, uttered by Elisabeth after Mary's arrival.

The confirmation as well as the congeniality of Elisabeth doubtless went far to make Mary responsive to the divine plan.

Upon entering the house Mary saluted Elisabeth (v. 40) first doubtless because Zacharias was in retirement owing to being deaf and dumb. Then occurred that remarkable experience related in verse 41 when the babe *leaped* in her womb. The Jews had a tradition that the unborn babes said "Amen" to praise God at the Red Sea. Elisabeth realized that the babe had leaped "for joy" and surely recognized this as supernatural. Some have connected this with John 3: 29. Then Elisabeth was "filled with the Holy Ghost" (cf. Luke 1: 15) and congratulated Mary (verse 42).

We note here that Elisabeth manifested no jealousy; she did not "nurse a grudge." Though she was of the Priest's family yet she rejoiced that Mary had the supreme honor of being the mother of our Lord rather than herself, and, in fact, she recognized the condescension of Mary in coming to her (verse 43). Thus she manifested the same spirit as was shown by her son, John the Baptist, when Jesus came to him to be baptized (cf. Mat. 3: 14). So in Elisabeth Mary found only helpfulness. She strengthened Mary's faith by her own experience (v. 45).

Then Mary broke forth in song in spite of fatigue. Her Magnificat reminds us of Hannah's song of praise (1 Sam. 2:1—). She reverently magnified the Lord (v. 46) and complacently rejoiced in Him (v. 47).

She recognized the condescension of the Lord in selecting her even as He had visited Leah (Gen. 29: 31) and Hannah (1 Sam. 1: 19) of old. She, like Gideon (Judg. 6: 15), took the low place and the Lord raised her up. He does exalt whom men despise if it is His purpose. Mary wonders at the Lord's doing (v. 49) and appreciates His

mercy (v. 50). He "evens things up" as is expressed poetically in verses 51-55.

§ 8. Birth of John the Baptist. Luke 1: 57-80.

The fact that Elisabeth was to be blessed with this child was an occasion of great rejoicing among her neighbors and kindred (v. 58).

The old Jewish custom was carried out with great significance (v. 59). It is interesting to see how those that were used to pave the way for ushering in the dispensation of grace were true to the religion of their fathers. God does most for those who have been faithful in using what they have. "They called him Zacharias after the name of his father." At the ceremony of the circumcision, the child was named and it was entirely fitting that he should be named after his father.

But "His mother answered. . . Not so; but John." Doubtless Zacharias had conferred with her by writing what had been revealed to him in the vision and she, gathering from his mute condition and the fact that a miracle was being performed in the bearing of the child, believed that the name designated by Zacharias was the name ordered of God.

Then "They made signs to his father." Evidently Zacharias was deaf as well as dumb, else he could have heard what they said.

"He wrote . . . his name is John." Zacharias had learned his lesson and was willing to conform to the wish of the Lord. Thus Zacharias testified that the grace of God was about to be manifest to Israel through the coming to the world of this new babe.

So "His mouth was opened . . . his tongue loosed and he spoke and praised God." He had seen the subject of his vision and the object of his prayer consummated. We can imagine that it was beyond his faith and yet it was the fulfillment of his hope and the satisfaction of a longing of his heart.

§ 9. Birth of Jesus the Christ. Luke 2: 1-7.

The decree of Cæsar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, requiring a general taxation, each in his own city, made it necessary for Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, the city of their family. There was great opposition to this "census" or "enrolling" or "taxation." One Judas of Galilee raised an army to resist it (cf. Acts 5: 37).

Mary and her husband went southward. When they arrived in Bethlehem they took up their abode in what had been used as a stable. Says Edersheim, "If we think of Jesus as the Messiah from heaven, the surroundings of outward poverty, so far from detracting seem most congruous to His Divine character. Earthly splendor would seem here like tawdry tinsel, and the utmost simplicity like that clothing of the lilies, which far surpassed all the glory of Solomon's court." But humble abode argued no social inferiority.

Bethlehem was filled with sacred memories. There Jacob mourned his beloved Rachel; there Ruth's gleaning was the heart of Boaz; there David tended his father's sheep and sang songs which supply worship even today. On these plains "shepherds kept their flocks by night" when there came that angelic song announcing our Redeemer's birth. Here first fell upon listening ears that anthem of "divine beauty and thrilling force"—"Glory to God in the highest," etc.

Monkish tradition points to a cave at the extremity of the town as the scene of the nativity. A church and convent, "The Church and Convent of the Nativity," have been erected over this cave. A silver star in the floor of a subterranean chamber is said by legend to mark the precise place of Christ's birth. But not until three centuries after Christ were "sacred places" sought, hence there was the indefiniteness of locations, and doubtless providentially so, lest the sureness of place would supplant the sincerity of the spirit, as is the case with some even now.

While Joseph and Mary, "wife" of Joseph though standing to him only in the actual relationship of "betrothed," were in Bethlehem Christ was born. Luke 2: 7 tersely tells

the naked fact of Him who was "Prince of Peace," destined to be "King of kings," the God-man. Says Edersheim, "Beyond this announcement of bare fact, Holy Scripture, with indescribable appropriateness and delicacy, draws a veil over that most sacred memory."

§ 10. The Angels and the Shepherds. Luke 2. 8-20.

Jewish tradition is helpful here. There was a settled conviction that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. It was also believed that He would be revealed from *Migdal Elder,* "the tower of the flock," whence the flocks destined for Temple sacrifices were watched. Edersheim tells us that the keeping of flocks in those days was forbidden except they were kept for use in the temple services. These shepherds doubtless had come in contact with the revelation given in the Old Testament Scriptures, and were students of the stars and so looking forward to the coming of that star which was to guide the wise men to the stable at Bethlehem.

We take it for granted that these shepherds were watching for some sign of Jesus' coming and to them was given a sign. Moreover the Lord took pains to send an Angel to them. The watchful will be rewarded. The Angel of the Lord appeared to these shepherds while they were on duty caring for their precious flocks under the stars. These shepherds were unaccustomed to angelic visions and hence they feared, but the friendly messenger was quick to bid them "fear not," and to tell them that he was the bringer of "tidings of great joy," not only for them but for "all the people." All who have heard of the angelic message and have received it as did the simple-hearted shepherds, have been filled with the joy of the Lord. The world has needed and does need the Saviour who is the only satisfaction of the human heart. It is the joy of the Lord that is the strength of His people. Joy comes when the satisfying portion is received.

The messenger told of the Saviour coming to the City of David. He who was to occupy the throne of the great King David, was being born in a lowly state. He was to be the Saviour to save His people from their sins. He was

Christ, the Anointed of God, and He was Lord, the rightful Ruler of the world, and yet He was as a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Certainly He might have come into the world as a spectacular personage, but the purposes of redemption would not have been realized had He not voluntarily emptied Himself and come in this lowly way.

The heavenly host which praised the Lord in the presence of the shepherds, said "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men." The significance of this is most interesting indeed. Jesus came into the world to glorify the Father. He clearly affirmed that He was not seeking His own glory, but that of the Father. His coming into the world to be the Saviour would cause men to know God and glorify Him as the Lord of their lives. His coming also meant peace on earth. Sin has brought strife into the world. Satan's dominion means conflict, slaughter and unrest, but perfect and everlasting peace will be realized when Jesus has perfect control over the world. Those who enthorne Him now realize the peace of God. The grand consummation will see good will existing among men. Selfishness will disappear and altruism will prevail.

Edersheim accepts the *textus receptus* on Luke 2:14,

> "Glory to God in the highest—
> And on earth peace—
> Among men good pleasure!"

and comments as follows, "Heaven took up the strain of 'glory'; earth echoed it as 'peace'; it fell on the ears and hearts of men as 'good pleasure.'" They sang prophetically. Having received the angelic message and listened to the "In excelsis Gloria" of "a multitude of the heavenly host" the shepherds entered Bethlehem and found the "stable" where the "holy group" was housed. Evidently Mary had received no ministration of loving hands for had she not herself wrapped the babe in swaddling clothes? (Luke 2:7, 12.)

Having seen the unusual family of three the shepherds went forth to "spread the rumor," as Scheusner translates "made known." Soon Simeon, Anna and others were eager

to see Him, "the Babe of Bethlehem." "And yet it seemed all so sudden, so strange, that on such a slender thread as the feeble throb of an infant life the salvation of the world should hang and no special care watch over its safety, no better shelter be provided it than a 'stable,' no other cradle than a manger."—*Edersheim.*

The heavenly message borne to the humble parents by the shepherds reminds the author of a remarkably put paragraph in Edersheim's "Life and Times of the Messiah": "It has been observed, that by the side of every humiliation connected with the Humanity of the Messiah, the glory of His Divinity was made to shine forth. . . . Thus, if He were born of the humble maiden of Nazareth, an angel announced His birth; if the Infant-Saviour was cradled in a manger, the shining host of heaven hymned His advent. And so afterwards if He hungered and was tempted in the wilderness, angels ministered to Him, even as an angel strengthened Him in the agony of the garden. If He submitted to baptism, the Voice and vision from heaven attested His Sonship; if enemies threatened, He could miraculously pass through them; if the Jews assailed, there was the voice of God to glorify Him; if He was nailed to the cross, the sun craped his brightness and the earth quaked; if He was laid in a tomb, angels kept its watches, and heralded His rising."

§ 11. The Circumcision. Luke 2: 21.

The virgin mother of our Lord is a most interesting study. She knew that Christ had been conceived by the Holy Spirit and was destined to be great (Luke 1: 26-38; 1: 43, *et al.*) yet "she kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart" (Greek here is *"sacredly* guarded . . . and put them together *in thought"*), even the angelic revelation to the shepherds. She treasured anything she heard about Jesus. She wondered about it, turning it over in her mind. She was vitally interested in each step in His life. She manifested an unusual interest in His lingering at the temple to discuss with the doctors. He was an enigma to her. She was proud of Him; she loved Him as a mother

and evidently she *treated Him as a human son.* Had not this been so He would not have lived the life of a man as He did. Had His God-side been emphasized constantly men would not have been natural or normal in His presence.

So Mary as a good Jewish woman fulfilled the requirements of the law by having her son circumcised. Then He received "the Angel-given name" Joshua (Jesus). It was right that Christ be circumcised for He was "made under the law" (Gal. 4:4). He submitted to it for our sakes. His obedience was perfect. He, by this rite, was supposed to be admitted from being a *stranger* to the *covenant of God,* yet He was a Son. Henry suggests "it supposed Him a sinner that needed His filthiness taken away." So He was made "in the *likeness* of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3). In His dedication at eight days we see a ground for the dedicating of infants early even though later they be baptized as He was.

§ 12. The Presentation in the Temple. Luke 2: 22-39.

Mary, conforming to the law, gave due attention to the requirements of her own purification and to the presentation of her son to God. When practicable, the redemption of the first-born and the purification of his mother were combined. "The redemption consisted of the formal presentation of the child to the priest, accompanied by two short 'benedictions'—the one for the law of redemption, the other for the gift of a first-born son, after which the redemption money was paid." This was in keeping with Num. 18:15, 16, Lev. 27:6.

The expression, "When the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled" refers to the forty days which, according to the law, must elapse between the birth of the child and the ceremonial purification of the mother and child (Lev. 12). The Rabbinic law fixed the time at *41* days for a son and *81* days for a daughter.

Mary brought a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons (v. 24); one instead of a lamb for a burnt offering (because she was poor) and the other for a sin offering. So

she offered not only her son (though He were not only God's but God, yet as our Mediator He was offered for our sakes) but a burnt offering also, and in the sin offering she came confessing her sin. Thus all righteousness was fulfilled. The law was not violated either for Christ or by Christ but fulfilled in detail, not in empty show but with a satisfying reality.

Joseph and Mary in the temple met Simeon, who evidently was a most remarkable character. Some have believed that he was the son of the great Hillel, president of the college and the Sanhedrin, and that he was the father of Gamaliel, at whose feet sat Saul of Tarsus. Jews claim that he was endued with a *prophetical* spirit. No mention is made of him in their Mishna, or book of traditions, "which," says Henry, "Intimates that he was no patron of their *fooleries.*"

"Simeon combined the three characteristics of Old Testament piety: 'justice,' as regarded his relation and bearing to God and man; 'fear of God,' in opposition to the boastful self-righteousness of Pharisaism; and above all, *longing expectancy* of the near fulfillment of the great promises, and that in their spiritual import as the 'Consolation of Israel.' "—*Edersheim.*

Simeon represented that expectancy for the appearing of the Son of David, the Messiah, that was present in Israel due to the element of prophetism. "The Pharisees hoped that God would some day establish His all-powerful kingdom among the Jews and that the whole world would be subject to Jerusalem, the capital of the anointed of God, the Messiah."—*Burton and Matthews.* Jewish prophets had declared that God would send One to deliver them from national distress provided they kept His commandments and were true to Him in other ways. Though unfaithfulness hindered the fulfillment of the promise, yet the hope continued and grew deeper and deeper. It included the longing for and expectation of a specific person. Though a religious hope this hope was fostered by national misfortune. All classes agreed that Messiah would be David's son and preached by Elijah (Mal. 4:5, Mark 9:11, 12).

A Messianic Psalm of the Pharisees is interesting at this point. I quote a little:

> "Behold, O Lord and raise unto them their King, the son of David, in the time, which thou, O God, knowest, that he may reign over Israel, thy servants, and gird him with strength, that he may break in pieces them that rule unjustly.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "And he shall possess the nations of the heathen to serve him beneath his yoke.
>
> "And he shall not faint all his days, because he leaned on God.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Blessed are they that shall be born in those days to behold the blessing of Israel" . . . etc.

Simeon held this "hope" in a vital way. On him was the Holy Spirit not only to make holy but to enable him to prophesy. He had received a revelation that he would see the Lord's Christ, the Anointed of God. His hopes were realized. He rejoiced as all Israel should have rejoiced.

Then this holy saint prayed that he might "depart in peace" (v. 29). He had lived to see "the Lord's Christ" and having seen Him he was ready to die. He could confidently commit all to God now that Messiah had come. For Messiah's coming to the Jewish mind would solve all problems religious and political. He would be the "Servant of the Lord"—alike the crown, the completion and representative of Israel. Messiah, *"the* Servant of the Lord," combined the threefold office of Prophet, Priest and King. So Messiah was expected to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. To the pious Jew "the whole past was symbolic and typical of the future— . . . two sayings of the Talmud (were): 'All the Prophets prophesied only of the days of the Messiah,' and 'The world was created for the Messiah.'"

So Simeon held in his own arms and saw with his own eyes the "salvation" (v. 30) of the Lord. Messiah meant

deliverance, justice, and the realization of all high and holy ideals for Israel. And yet He would be "before the face of all peoples." He was "a light to lighten the Gentiles" as well as "The glory of thy people Israel."

Verse 33 indicates that Simeon had a deeper insight into Christ's future than did Joseph and Mary. His blessing them (v. 34) was priestly or patriarchal. (Some hold he was a priest.) He seems to see that while many would be lifted up by this Messiah yet many would go down before Him as the words, "This child is set before the *falling* and *rising* up of many," indicate. As Peter said, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient . . . a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense."

Then Simeon prophesied of the pain and sorrow that Mary would undergo because of her intimate relationship to Him (v. 35). Imagine her anguish at the crucifixion. It must have been as if a sword was thrust through her heart. Yet the cross was necessary. It is the *touchstone* of the race. By the cross men are tested. Christ, anticipating myriads coming to the foot of the cross for salvation, "endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12: 2). Yet the preaching of "Christ crucified" was to the Jews a *stumbling block* and to the Greeks *foolishness*. And so is it today. The Gospel is to some the "savour of life unto life" and to others "of death unto death."

Then there was Anna, the widowed prophetess, as Paul would say, "a widow indeed," who spent her time in the temple where she worshipped "with fastings and supplications." At the hour of Christ's presentation she came up to the temple (she did not actually live there) and recognized in Him the One who should bring the "redemption of Jerusalem." Her longing was for redemption from the political tyranny of Judea under Rome, for the recovery of her exiled tribe, Asher; she wished for better social, moral and religious conditions. Her hopes were nourished in the temple, but not by the rabbis. She whispered her faith in the Babe of Bethlehem to like-minded spirits.

§ 13. The Wise Men From the East. Mat. 2: 1-12.

Evidently these men came from Chaldea, Persia or some other Eastern country where the Jews had been during captivity. Their information doubtless had been received from Jewish prophecies. Balaam's prophecy (Num. 24: 17) clearly referred to a "Star." Many astronomers without success have undertaken to show, the noted Kepler being one, that contemporaneous with Christ's birth was a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn which produced "the star" visible to the Magi.

"Wise Men," *Magi,* was a term used of those who used magical arts as well as of "Eastern (specially Chaldee) priest-sages, whose researches, in great measure as yet mysterious and unknown to us, seem to have embraced much deep knowledge, though not untinged with superstition." To the latter class the Magi of Matthew must have belonged.

It was after the Babe of Bethlehem had been seen by the shepherds, had been presented at the temple where He was beheld by Simeon and Anna, that "His Star" was seen by these "Wise Men," representatives of the Gentile nations. It was fitting that He who was the *desire of nations* should receive this attention from these Gentiles since He was destined to be "King over all." Though He had "emptied Himself" of those insignia to royalty which the world and the Jews especially naturally expected, yet it would have been pathetic indeed had no one seen in Him "the King of the Jews." But in these Wise Men we find that wisdom that scented out Him who was not detected by "His own" who *received Him not.* That Israel was not ready to receive such a Messiah as was Jesus is evident, or else through the shepherds, Simeon and Anna the news would have soon been carried to the Jewish world. But they could not accept a Messiah in swaddling clothes. So the enthusiasm of these witnesses was regarded as fanaticism.

We do not wonder that to Jerusalem the Wise Men came to find "the King of the Jews." Jerusalem should have known.

But what a response greets the earnest seekers from the

East. Their question, "Where is he," etc., is met with confusion. Jealous Herod knits his brow in perplexity. The Jews are vexed lest the cruel Idumæan shall put forth an edict of destruction. Temporal interests loom larger than even the Messiah.

But the crafty king sets about to make sure of destroying any possible rival to his throne. Assembling "the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ should be born." Their findings were "In Bethlehem of Judea," as Micah had written. By this forced inquiry and admission God was accumulating evidence for the incarnation, but tragic enough is it that the Jews made no effort to accept Him, as a nation. Their traditions had blinded their eyes to truth. Their own Messianic conceptions carried more weight than simple prophetic statements.

Having learned from the "wise men" of the Gentiles of the presence of a "King of the Jews" and having learned from the wise men of the Jews where their longed for Messiah and King was to be born, Herod next inquires when the "star" appeared. Then this monster of iniquity intelligently and secretly laid his plans to destroy the "Seed of woman," but high heaven knew and watched over the Infant.

Herod's pretence to seek information as to the exact whereabouts of the Child Jesus in order that he might worship Him (v. 8) is but a commentary on his false character.

Now the sidereal guide again leads the Magi until it stands "over the place where the young child was." The stationary star was an indication to them that their journey was ended. And with a "Eureka" of exultation they entered into the presence of Him who had been the Object of their quest.

Their first act was to worship Him. Divinely led, they paid homage to Him who one day will receive not only the plaudits and praise but the worship of all mankind, when "to Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess," when kings will cast their crowns at His feet and all will join in the "Hosanna, to the King." All this the worship of the Gentiles from the East anticipated, but it was

"done in a corner." Kings of earth and Emperor of Rome were unwilling to relinquish their power then, as the Jews were not ready to accept a Messiah from heaven. Man, created in God's image, has at least a measure of freedom. He exercises that. But another unseen force controlled many on earth. "Kings of earth, dominated by the *God of this age,* set themselves . . . against our Lord and against His anointed." Cherished systems are tenaciously held to and our Master must wait. His reception tarries. "He came into His own [things] and they that were His own received Him not." But what a reception accorded Him by these Magi! "Ancient tradition represents one of these as a prophet, and links him with the gift of myrrh, as the type of the sorrow and hunger of the hearts that were crying out for God. The second is described as a priest, bringing his gift of frankincense, and representing the needs of man for a Saviour's intercession and offering. The third is a king and brings his gifts of gold. The same tradition beautifully adds, that when the gold was poured at His feet, the little child looked in the face of the worshipper, but made no other sign. As the second presented his fragrant incense, He gently smiled in the face of the sage. But as the third bowed with his sorrowful face and his gift of myrrh, the tradition declares that the Child stretched forth His little hand and tenderly touched the trembling man who was weeping at His cradle. Whether true or not, the suggestion, at least, is both true and beautiful. Our costliest offerings are acceptable to Christ; but more welcome is the sinner's approach, bringing his guilt and need; and most welcome of all is the sorrowing and broken heart, which He stoops to raise and rest upon His own loving bosom."—*A. B. Simpson in "Christ in the Bible."*

The ancient Church saw in the gold a symbol of Christ's royalty; in the myrrh, a symbol of His humanity, "and that in the fullest evidence of it, in His burying"; in the incense, a symbol of His Divinity.

Having done homage and presented gifts to the Infant Jesus the wise men, warned by God in a dream, returned to their own country by another way and so eluded Herod, who was eager to do away with the Son of God because

he feared for his throne. To what nefarious tricks men will stoop to guard some fancied power or government. One would almost think that there should be a special judgment of tyrants, yet He who judgeth righteously knows the weakness of men and surely realizes the abnormal strain upon a mere man with great authority. But only God's interposition kept the usurping Idumæan from murdering the God man, as an infant. Oh, the mercy of God!

§ 14. The Flight Into Egypt and Return to Nazareth. Mat. 2: 13-23.

"Warned by the Angel of the Lord in a dream, the Holy Family sought temporary shelter in Egypt." And so Hosea's prophecy, "Out of Egypt did I call my son" (Hos. 11: 1) was fulfilled. There were many Jews in Egypt at this time and probably suitable companionship was found. This sparing of "The Holy Child Jesus" in Egypt, when an irate king would have treated Him as were all babes under two years of Bethlehem, despatched, reminds us of the saving of the life of the babe Moses, when Pharaoh had decreed to destroy all the male children of the Israelites (Ex. 2: 1—). Thus the remarkable Nile and its "gift," Egypt, was a second time a haven for a deliverer of the people of God. For Herod had been baffled by the Magi and so sought to rid himself of his imagined competitor by a ruthless slaughter of all of Bethlehem's babes. We can see the necessity for a hurried flight into Egypt or else detection would have been certain in so small a town as Bethlehem. Edersheim estimates that no more than twenty babes were under two years in that place. Herod's act of cruelty in this case was in keeping with his character and conduct. He placed no premium on life. "He was merely the tool of Satan," and capable of unspeakable atrocities. These infants have been regarded as the "protomartyrs," the first witnesses of Christ, "the blossom of martyrdom" ("flores martyrum" as Prudentius calls them). And Herod who destroyed whole families when a suspicion that his crown was in danger entered his mind, was a suitable instrument of evil to execute such a fiendish crime.

On the quotation from Jeremiah 31 : 15, Edersheim says, "In the murder of 'the Innocents' the evangelist sees the fulfilment of Rachel's lament (who died and was buried in Ramah) over her children, the men of Benjamin, when the exiles to Babylon met in Ramah, and there was bitter wailing at the prospect of parting for hopeless captivity, and yet bitterer lament, as they who might have encumbered the onward march were pitilessly slaughtered." In Jewish thinking the unity of the Old Testament was regarded. All pointed to Messiah. "The words of Hosea were in the highest sense 'fulfilled' in the flight, and return of the Saviour from Egypt. *To an inspired writer, nay, to a true Jewish reader of the Old Testament, the question in regard to any prophecy could not be: "What did the prophet?—but, What did the prophecy?—mean.* cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 9-11. And this could only be unfolded in the course of Israel's history. Similarly, those who ever saw in the past the prototype of the future, and recognized in events, not only the principle, but the very features of that which was to come, could not fail to perceive in the bitter wail of the mothers of Bethlehem over their slaughtered children, the full realization of the prophetic description of the scene enacted in Jeremiah's day."

Probably the family of our Lord did not stay long in Egypt. Herod's day of death came and thus the reason for Jesus being away from His native land was removed.

Herod's death was accompanied with much misery. For years he had had no rest owing to the danger of a rival to his throne haunting him. Though he had sacrificed thousands in his vain effort to drive from his mind the ghost of fear of rivals yet was he ill at ease. Then fears seized him. Remorse gnawed at his mind. He would, in his frenzy, call for his "passionately-loved" wife, Mariamme, and her sons, who had been among his murdered victims. In his madness he attempted suicide. A most loathsome disease took hold of him. Says Blaikie, "It consisted of a slow fever, with ulcerations that bred worms,—swollen feet, want of breath, and convulsion fits." Needless to say his sufferings were agonizing. Upon the advice of physicians he was carried to the baths of Callirhœ (east of the

Jordan). He exhausted remedies to no purpose. When he realized death was imminent he had himself carried to his palace under the palm trees of Jericho. His last act of heartless tyranny was his consigning to the flames "two of the most honored and loved Rabbis—Judas and Matthias," and the deposition of the High Priest, because these had participated in an attempt to "sweep away all traces of Herod's idolatrous rule" before his death.

When he realized the end was near and believed that news of his death would be met with rejoicing he summoned Israel's noblest from all over Jericho and had them shut up in the Hippodrome. To his sister Salome and her husband he assigned the unpleasant duty of having these slain as soon as he should die so that mourning instead of rejoicing would spread over the land.

Five days before his death he was delighted to receive from Cæsar Augustus the permission to have his son Antipater executed. He it was who falsely accused and really murdered his half brothers Alexander and Aristobulus. Herod had reigned 37 years and was 70 when he died.

Herod was buried with empty pageantry and "barbaric" splendor in the Castle of Herodium, near Bethlehem. The Jewish nobles were released and a Feast Day was declared instead of a day of mourning as Herod had desired.

Herod had changed his will three times. His final one gave Archelaus the coveted position as his successor. The army at once recognized him as king, but he wisely deferred to accept the crown until he had the approval of Augustus. There were no less than four distinct delegations to Rome, but Augustus finally made Archelaus Ethnarch.

When Joseph on his way home with his family learned of Herod's successor he decided to go to Nazareth that was to be under a tetrarch because he "feared to go thither, and being warned of God in a dream." When we learn of the character of Archelaus we do not wonder at the fear of Joseph nor the divine interposition. Archelaus "began his rule by . . . the slaughter of his opponents. . . . He far surpassed his father in cruelty, oppression and luxury, the grossest egotism, and the lowest sensuality, and that, without possessing the talent or energy of Herod. His brief

reign ceased in the year six of our era, when the Emperor banished him, on account of his crimes, to Gaul." Such was the crowned monster whom the holy family avoided by going to Nazareth.

But this was as the prophets had foretold (v. 23).

§ 15. Childhood at Nazareth. Mat. 2: 23; Luke 2: (39) 40.

Jesus being called a "Nazarene" is most significant when we know for what Nazareth of Galilee stood. That He "grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him" in Nazareth argues well for the possibility of such a development as He reached in busy commercial, worldly surroundings.

Someone has humorously said that "Abe" Lincoln and such prodigies, who started to school late or attended very little, if at all, and yet reached gigantic intellectual stature, did so because "they were spared a lot of poor teaching." It is a matter of history that Socrates was great in spite of the sophists of his day. Now the fact that Jesus went with His parents past Judea into Galilee would, by all the "learned" of His day, be considered a clear indication that His chances to become great in scholastic studies were nil. Judea stood for intricate scholastic studies; Galilee for active pursuits. The common saying was: "If a person wishes to be rich, let him go north; if he wants to be wise, let him come south." All who wished to "learn the law" went to Judea. Galilee did not lend itself to a "reflective life." Great centers of commerce were close by; foreigners were everywhere present; "one of the world's greatest highways passed through Galilee." On the other hand Judea invited one to an "introspective" or a "retrospective" life. The visitor in Judea, if he avoided "the great towns . . . centers of heathenism," would meet "those gaunt representatives of what was regarded as the superlative excellency of his religion." These men were what the Jews revered in religion. They were ascetic and studious in the mysteries of the Jewish faith and guides to heavenly portals. They could "bind or loose," "remit or retain sins"

in that they could hold a man to or release him from expiatory sacrifices. "No Hindoo fanatic would more humbly bend before Brahmin saints, nor devout Romanist more venerate the members of a holy fraternity, than the Jew his great Rabbis. An illustration of this in its extremity is a *dictum* supported by an alteration of Proverbs 8:36. It runs as follows, "He who blows his nose in the presence of his Rabbi is worthy of death."

Now for reasons of geography and history Galilee was so different from Judea. Barrenness, decaying cities, solitary plains, with distant glorious Jerusalem ever in the far background, gave way to a beautiful country, olive trees, vineyards and a teeming population. Judea invited "solitary thought and religious abstraction"; no one in Galilee "would be likely to indulge in a morbid fanaticism." In Rabbinic circles all that was Galilean was held in contempt. People of Galilee were blamed for neglecting their own language and accused of "ridiculous mistakes." "A woman cooked for her husband two lentils (tlphj) instead of two feet (of an animal-tlpj) as desired. On another occasion a woman mal-pronounced "Come, I will give thee milk," into "Companion, butter devour thee!"

So accustomed were people to say "Galilean—Fool!" that a woman so addressed the great R. Jese, who used two needless words in asking her the road to Lydda. The Rabbi asked: *"What road leads to Lydda?"* The woman pointed out that, since it was not lawful to multiply speech with a woman he should have asked: "Whither to Lydda," thus using two words instead of four words.

But in despised Galilee Jesus came to a full human development. To us He seems to be more truly "man" (anthropos) for having mingled with men of affairs in Nazareth of Galilee. More understandable do certain passages of Scripture become to us since we know of Galilee. He "was *in all points* tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). He was verily *in the world,* not in a convent, or monastery. We appreciate why the Jews marveled saying, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15), and why Nicodemus was rebuked by the Chief Priests and Pharisees when he fairly but

feebly stood up for Jesus and the import of the question, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (John 7:52).

For a somewhat detailed and highly suggestive study of the probable *child-life* of Jesus the student would do well to carefully read "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messenger," Edersheim, Vol. I, pp. 226-234. Herein we learn how the average Jewish home offered religious advantages in striking contrast to those of Gentile homes. Education began in the *home* and example preceded precept. The relation of parent to child and vice-versa the "semi-divine relationship" is clearly set forth in the Fifth Commandment. Observe the punishment for its breach (Deut. 21: 18-21) and the description of the vengeance that overtakes such a sin (Prov. 30:17). The *mother* had charge of the first education. The Talmud has a saying of one of the School of Rabbi Jannai that knowledge of the law may be looked for in those who have sucked it at their mother's breast. As the boy clung to his mother's skirts while she attended to her religious household duties wonderment would begin to fill his mind. Then imagine how a Jewish mother could hold her child entranced with stories of Abraham, Moses and the Red Sea, Joshua and Jordan's opening, Daniel and the lions, etc. It was all the history of her own son's tribe. He listened and learned. Then she taught the Scriptures, as the story of Timothy shows (2 Tim. 3:14, 15). For Timothy had known the Scriptures from an infant.

And the father also was "bound to teach the son." Every other engagement, even the necessary meal, gave way to the father teaching the son the Torah (Law). Any man who neglected the duty was of the "profane, vulgar (an Am ha-arets)." The memory for Scripture was cultivated. Soon the child learned his birthday verse—some verse of Scripture beginning or ending with, or at least containing, the same letters as his Hebrew name. "This guardian promise the child would insert in his daily prayers." So was the child taught at home. Then he went to school, where he studied the Bible up to ten years of age, from ten to fifteen the Mishna or traditional law and then theo-

logical studies. Leviticus was first studied, as it contained instruction in the ordinances with which the Jews should have been familiar. We cannot but wonder how the boy Jesus drank in the deeper meanings of those sacrifices which were typical of Himself, or who taught Him or who was nearest Him as He sat and studied the sacred volume, but that He learned it we know from His familiarity with it.

"And the child grew." Jesus was not simply the divine child but the completely human lad. He increased physically as He did in knowledge and wisdom. Professor Kendrick says that He went through all the natural gradations of childship and youthful development. The thought of the complete humanity of Christ is a comfort to us when we remember that He passed through the experiences of childhood and was hence subjected to the subtle perplexities and temptations of early life. "Waxed strong in spirit." We can imagine that besides being a real boy, full of life and ready for every deed that a good boy would do, He was also of the proper spirit. "Filled with wisdom." Reference is here made to His spiritual, mental, and religious development. The context indicates that Jesus availed Himself of every opportunity to increase His knowledge and use it aright. "The grace of God was upon him." He enjoyed the favor of the Lord. God was satisfied with His conduct. He was spiritual as well as strong physically. Boys that are real Christians are better in body and mind for so being. Attention here might be called to the surrounding influence amid which Christ grew up. He lived in the village surrounded by natural scenery. He breathed pure air and learned to work as well as pray. Though He were a king in spirit, yet unlike Moses, He was patient under the galling yoke of Rome. Surely He was taught the prophets and knew the Jewish hope of a Redeemer. He visited historic places and delved into the romance of His own national history. His school training was not neglected, since in His day education had been made compulsory. His home training must have been religious and according to the custom in Jewish homes. He would be compelled to commit to memory Old Testament Scriptures.

§ 16. Visit to Jerusalem When Twelve Years Old. Luke 2: 41-50.

His "Parents went to Jerusalem." According to the law of Moses adult males were compelled to go to Jerusalem to attend the three great feasts (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles). Devout women sometimes accompanied their husbands. "Feast of the Passover." Commemorative of the Israelites leaving Egypt when the death angel passed over the homes of the Israelites, the blood was sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels. These religious feasts were enthusiastic religious meetings which made for the unity of the people and contributed toward social progress.

"Twelve years old" is the age of responsibility. The Jewish boy at that age became "a son of the law."

"The child Jesus." The word used here for child in the original may be translated *"boy."* Prof. Riddle calls attention to the fact that prior to this the diminutive term was used. "Tarried behind." He was doubtless much interested in the temple and the teaching of the rabbis, and hence neglected to observe the departure of His caravan. "Joseph and his mother knew not of it." The close implication is that the parents had such confidence in their son that they had no concern for Him. What a fine example the boy Jesus is to other boys!

"A day's journey." The first day's journey was likely not more than eight or ten miles. "Kinsfolk and acquaintance." The parents probably supposed that He would be among the younger set of their intimate friends.

"Turned back . . . seeking him." The implication is that they sought Him all the way back supposing that He probably started out with the company and for some reason had been left along the wayside.

"After three days they found him." Doubtless dating from the time they left Jerusalem first. Hence they must have spent at least a day in quest of Him after they arrived in the city. "Sitting in the midst of the doctors." The "doctors'" or teachers' seat, "not Moses' seat"; the older students on a low bench; the younger on the ground, literally "at the feet of" their instructor.—*Ellicott.* We can

imagine the affectionate, reverential, and sympathetic relationship that grew up between teachers and scholars under these conditions. "Hearing and asking questions." The fact that Jesus asked questions as well as heard what the doctors said simply indicates that He was quite mature in His mind for His age and that He was doing what any interested scholar should do; that is, He asked questions. All good teachers testify that they learn a good deal from the questions that their pupils ask them. There is no doubt that the rabbis learned from the boy Jesus. Boys today should sit at the feet of Jesus of the Bible and learn, not simply by being lectured to, but by the question and answer method. Every great teacher comes to the Word of God in the spirit of a child.

"Astonished at his understanding." The rabbis were doubtless amazed at His knowledge of the Scriptures and His understanding of the real meaning. He penetrated more deeply into them than even they themselves had been accustomed to do.

"They were amazed." Joseph and Mary never expected to find their Son the object of such honor. We can easily imagine that by this time He was regarded in His home as quite an unusual child, yet they probably did not look for Him to be lost in theological discussion with the rabbis. "Son . . . thy father and I." Mary here addresses Jesus as though He were the son of Joseph. This form of speech was required by custom. "Sought thee sorrowing." "This was the first sorrow He had caused her."—*Riddle.*

"How is it that ye sought me?" The question seems to indicate that Jesus expected that they would know that He would be in the temple. He Himself was so occupied with the holy and blessed place that He felt His parents should have known of His great interest in His Father's house. "That I must be about my Father's business." The word "business" in the original is omitted, hence the idea is He thought His parents should know that He had been in His Father's house or engaged in His Father's affairs. When He was in Nazareth, His proper home, says Peloubet, was with Joseph and Mary; but when He was in Jerusalem, His proper home was the temple. There is no better way

for a boy to be about His Father's business than to early consecrate himself to God and learn of His Father's Word by being in His Father's house.

"They understood not." The parents did not fully comprehend the meaning of their Son. The great lesson for us is that we should be doing everything we do as unto the Lord, and that folks should understand that whether we be in school, in the home, or in business, we should be so conducting our life that it will be well pleasing to God and will be in accord with God's plan for us.

§ 17. Eighteen Years at Nazareth. Luke 2: 51, 52.

51. "Came to Nazareth." This was His home until He went forth on His mission. "Was subject to them," to both His mother and Joseph. He was doubtless obedient, helpful and ready to do anything that was placed in His hand to do. The fact that Christ, who was so superior, was in such willing subjection to His parents and lived such a helpful life, is a lesson to children of our day. As children, we should learn to do things even though they are not suited to our tastes if they will contribute to the happiness of those about us. It is quite certain that Joseph died some time before the public ministry of our Lord began. Mark 6: 3 tells us that Jesus was a carpenter, hence we have reason to believe He had the care of and likely the support of His widowed mother. Thus He exalted and ennobled toil. "His mother kept all these sayings," etc. She was doubtless interested in seeing how they would unfold in His life. Boys and girls should remember with what keen interest their parents observe them and should seek in some way, through love and obedience, to repay their parents for the attention given to them in their tender years.

52. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature." We can imagine what a marvelous character the youth Jesus was, how He was lovely as well as strong and faithful. He never yielded to temptation. The victories of His life not only gave Him the love of His Father, but must have marked Him among His fellows as most unusual. "In favor with God." Inasmuch as He was entirely submissive

to God, and hence in Him the Father was always well pleased, the first aim of every child and youth should be to have his conduct such as God would approve. "In favor with man." Pure religion, so long as it does not bring us into conflict with the opinions of those about us, will have such a good effect upon us that it will make us more acceptable to men. Those who do not indulge in sin will become more beautiful and attractive even to worldly people. There is an ideal to which most people are aspiring, which they may see realized in you, if you are being conformed to the image of Christ.

PART II

The Opening Events of Christ's Ministry

THE OPENING EVENTS OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY

§ 18. The Ministry of John the Baptist. Mat. 3: 1-12; Mark 1: 1-8; Luke 3: 1-20.

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God." This is Mark's introductory sentence to the most unique record ever written. Yet we are not able to understand the Gospel story unless we know of him of whom Jesus Himself said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist."

Luke tells us just *when* "the word of the Lord came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness" (Luke 3: 2). By Luke's accurate placing of the Baptist with respect to the rulers of that day (Luke 3: 1-2) we are able to contrast earth's conditions with that "Kingdom of heaven" which John announced (Mat. 3: 2). Here also at the very beginning of John's ministry we have a description of the type of life led by John, who ushered in "Such a revival as the world has probably never seen."—*A. B. Simpson.*

What was the world of John's day? It was a world on the downgrade. "The reign of Augustus marked, not only the climax, but the crisis of Roman history." In politics, philosophy, religion and society the limit had been reached. One man ruled the world. Under him was an army of 340,000 men. He headed the Senate. He was the High Priest of religion which apotheosized the Emperor. Luxury and misery were side by side in Imperial Rome. Slavery was the bane of a people once noted for hardihood. Luxury and vice abounded.

Stoicism which "flattered its pride" and Epicureanism which "gratified its sensuality" were the ruling forms of thought. Only Cicero defended the immortality of the soul, and he in a mild way. And if no life beyond death, why not indulge the passions? Religion necessarily was

at a low ebb. "The only religion insisted on by the Roman State was the worship of the Emperor." The vilest creatures were apotheosized. We can imagine the state of a religion that prayed for the death of a rich relative; the satisfaction of unnatural lusts and blasphemed when such prayers were unanswered. On the tomb of a child was found: "To the unjust gods who robbed me of life"; on the tomb of a girl of twenty: "I lift my hands against the god who took me away, innocent as I am."

Indecency was worshipped. *Conscience* as we know it did not exist. "Might was right." Marriage became rare because of female dissoluteness. "Abortion and the exposure of newly born babes" were common. Even the philosophers engaged in vice. Heartlessness was common. Sick and old slaves were cast aside to die. There were no hospitals. The only escape for those tired of life was suicide! Human hope had vanished. "Seneca longed for some hand from without to lift up from the mire of despair." Cicero saw that the true embodiment of virtue would be hailed enthusiastically on earth. Tacitus thought that life was a farce and that Rome was cursed.

To such a world John proclaimed "The Kingdom of God." Edersheim points out a *synchronism* that to him seems quite as remarkable and challenging to the reverent student as the star of the East, and the birth of the Messiah. "On the 19th of December, A. D. 69, the Roman capital with its ancient sanctuaries was set on fire. Eight months later on the ninth of Ab. A. D. 70, the temple of Jerusalem was given to the flames. It is not a coincidence but a conjunction, for upon the ruins of heathenism and of Apostate Judaism was the Church of Christ to be reared."

So John the Baptist, the son of a priest, had likely been educated early in life, and then had gone to a life of seclusion in the desert, where he had enjoyed lonely fellowship with God preparatory to his great ministry though he had been *filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb.* John, "the messenger," who went before the face of Christ that he might "make ready the way of the Lord" was peculiarly fitted to be "the voice" announcing the com-

ing of the King. And should not his message have been heeded? Was not Judea galling under the yoke of Rome—according to the rabbis, the fourth beast of Daniel's vision? Would not the "kingdom of heaven" or "kingdom of God" have been preferred to that of the "Great and Terrible Beast"?

Tiberius Cæsar (Luke 3:1) was no mild ruler in respect to the Jews as was Augustus. "Merciless harshness characterized the administration of Palestine." The Emperor was hostile to the Jews. Caiaphas, the high priest, was a tool of Roman tyranny. Pontius Pilate, governor of Judæa, set aside the religious scruples of the Jews.

Now John appeared on such a scene to announce a kingdom, happy and glorious, "even beyond the dreams of the religious enthusiast." Little wonder the prophetic appearing and Nazarite-living John, the prophet of the desert, attracted the crowds to his ministry. For John gave them promise of the approach of "The Kingdom of God" that might be entered by repentance and baptism. Edersheim analyzes 119 passages in the New Testament where the expression "Kingdom" occurs and gathers that it means *the rule of God, which was manifested in and through Christ is apparent in the Church, gradually develops amidst hindrances, is triumphant at the Second Coming of Christ, and finally perfected in the world to come.* John called upon the Jews to submit to the reign of God about to be manifested in Christ. The outward mode of entrance into this "Kingdom" was through baptism, by which proselytes had become Jews. It was the route of humiliation.

I. What John Preached

Verse 7. "The multitude." There were so many that Mat. 3:5 states that "Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan" went out to him. "Came forth to be baptized of him." Dr. Alexander says that John's baptism was a ceremonial washing which denoted a profession of repentance. In the warm climate of the East the washing away of the dust which naturally collects upon the body tends to lighten the spirit and so bring refreshment and happiness. Hence the Orientals should appreci-

ate the significance of being plunged into and brought out from the water. The open confession necessary in baptism is surely an aid to the spiritual life within. "Generation of vipers." The viper was the venomous serpent. Probably John was thinking of the malignity, craft and deceitfulness, and doubtless the deadly poison that was inoculated with the spirit of those that had come to him. Abbott says that this was especially addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mat. 3:5). Surely there is a sense in which this would apply to all sinners. "Who hath warned you to flee?" The forerunner of Christ was indignant when he saw the people seeking what might lead them to feel they could evade their duty by being baptized, when they should have repented. "From the wrath to come." The Bible frequently refers to the wrath to come for sin. Such statements as "Our God is a consuming fire" and "The wicked shall be turned into Hell" indicate the justice of God to be meted out in the form of anger upon the sinner.

Verse 8. "Bring forth fruits." Their lives were to show the results of the change that had been wrought within them. Any tree may be known by its fruits, so the life is known by the deeds. "Worthy of repentance." If they had repented before this, the works of the flesh would not have been so pronounced, but they would rather have been bearing the fruits of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:19-23). "Abraham to our father." The Jews counted upon their relation to Abraham. Plumptre says, "Men imitate these Jews who trust in any forms of religion or pious parents or church going for the hope of salvation." "God is able . . . to raise up children unto Abraham." John wanted to disabuse their minds so that they would not continue to base their faith upon the wrong foundation. The fact is that the Lord would set aside the Jews and give the Gentiles, publicans and sinners their day of grace while the Jews were scattered throughout the world, where they are still wandering in partial blindness.

Verse 9. "The axe is laid upon the root of the trees." Says Saddler, "It is as if a wood cutter had been to some noble tree of the forest and had laid the axe at its roots ready to fell it, but had gone away for some reason and

it had a short respite." It was very true that the Jewish nation was doomed, but the Lord Jesus was giving them grace. The history of the captivity teaches us that there does come a time when doom is certain. Let us embrace the opportunities of grace lest this unfavorable day overtake us. "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down." The character of the fruit of an individual life or a nation's life indicates the destiny of that people or person. This principle obtains—If the tree is evil, the fruit will be evil and both will be destroyed. Only a radical change of life through the new birth and the infilling of the Holy Spirit will warrant our being spared from the wrath of the Judge which sits at the door.

II. The Effect of John's Preaching

Verse 10. "What shall we do?" His message had such an effect upon his hearers that they were eager to do that which was necessary to keep them from being hewn down and cast into the fire.

Verse 11. "He answered . . . he that hath two coats," etc. This coat was an outer garment. Even though a man were so poor that he had but two, he could spare one of these and give it to him who had none. "He that hath meat . . . do likewise." Paul (2 Cor. 8:13-15), James (Jas. 2:15-17), and John (1 John 3:17) gave the same teaching which they had learned from the spirit of the Master.—*Cambridge Bible.*

Verse 12. "Publicans." Tax gatherers. The Roman government leased out the collection of its taxes to speculators who farmed this work out to subordinate collectors. There was a great deal of extortion in this business because the temptation was great and the weak yielded to their desire for money. cf. Zacchæus.

Verse 13. "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." Each publican was supposed to supply simply what justice required regardless of what the other collectors were doing. This reformation in the conduct of the ones who desired to be righteous would naturally bring upon them the hatred of the extortioners. When one begins to

do right he is apt to be severely criticized by those who continue in wrongdoing.

Verse 14. "And the soldiers." The soldiers were armed policemen who had the opportunity of robbing and doing violence in general to people. They were asked to *accuse no man falsely.* They did this in order that they might have an opportunity of robbing them. They were exhorted to be content with their wages lest they should feel like getting gain in unjust ways. None of these classes was exhorted to leave the world, but all were expected to live justly in the world. Such is the expectation today. If God expects us so to do, surely He Himself indwelling within us in the person of the Holy Spirit is the enablement for this kind of living.

Verse 15. "The people were in expectation . . . mused in their hearts of John whether he were the Christ." Schaff says, "This shows the deep impression made by John as well as the general expectation that the Messiah would speedily come."

Verse 16. "I indeed baptize you with water." John indicated that he could simply perform the outward ceremony. This is all that any minister of religion can do. He does this as the agent or instrument of the Godhead. "One mightier." Reference is here made to the omnipotent Son of God. "Latchet of whose shoes." This was the thing that fastened the sandals. "I am not worthy to unloose." "This office was performed," says Ripley, "by the lowest servants," as even John, who is recognized as being so great, was unworthy to loosen the sandals of the Messias. How great must have been the estimate of Jesus in the eyes of the Baptist! "Baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Fire is symbolical of the Holy Spirit in that it purifies the dross from human nature and brings warmth, light and life to the soul.

Verse 17. "Whose fan is in his hand." This fan was a broad wooden shovel with which the grain was tossed into the breeze so that the light chaff might be blown away from the heavier wheat. "I will thoroughly cleanse." That is, separate the good from the bad. "His floor." In those days they used a hard beaten piece of ground for the thresh-

ing floor. Just as the thresher would see to it that the chaff was all separated from the wheat, nothing but the pure grain would remain, so John indicated Christ would be thorough in His dealing with men. "Will gather the wheat . . . but the chaff he will burn." Evidently reference is here made to the fact that the righteous will be gathered into the kingdom of heaven and that the wicked will be destroyed with fire unquenchable. We note that John's message was clear and forceful, and we little wonder that such words coming from this most extraordinary character carried with them such tremendous weight.

§ 19. The Baptism of Jesus. Mat. 3: 13-17; Mark 1: 9-11; Luke 3: 21, 22 (23a).

The *fact* of Jesus' baptism is seldom denied. The *reason* is a matter of discussion. Various theories have been advanced. We list them in brief. First, His mother desired Him to do it just as she had seen to it that He was circumcised. Second, collusion with John to "help out" John. Third, as a representative of the race. Fourth, in order to separate Him from Israel. Fifth, a surrendering to the coming death of Calvary. Sixth, to honor John's baptism. Seventh, that the token of His Messiahship might appear. Here we may think of that "dove descent" understood by John the Baptist. Eighth, commencement of His Messianic work. Ninth, consecration to His life work. Tenth, to be spiritually qualified. Eleventh, to avail Himself of John's influence. But I like the idea that whatever may have been Jesus' conception of being baptized of John, the result was that *a new conception of Messianic consciousness dawned on Him.* He did what He knew was God's will for Him (Heb. 10: 7) and heaven spoke its approval. By this baptism John, who knew enough of Jesus that he realized the futility of baptizing Him unto repentance, learned truly that Christ was God's Son. By Jesus submitting to this external ordinance John learned by external sign, "a dove," that Jesus was the looked for Messiah, and then John testified unequivocally. Who knows what impression was made on Christ's mind by the "Descent of the Holy Spirit" on Him at the Jordan?

§ 20. The Temptation in the Wilderness. Mat. 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12, 13; Luke 4: 1-13.

The temptation of Jesus was analogous to that of Eve in the Garden of Eden. It is outlined in 1 John 2: 16. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, which is not of the Father but is of the world." Robert McQuilken has pointed out that the appeal was made to physical desire, covetousness, and pride. It is a matter of regretable history that the woman yielded to the tempter in Eden and that the first Adam took of the forbidden fruit and ate. We praise God that it is also a matter of glorious history that the second Adam resisted the temptation. Theologians have discussed the inability of Christ to sin. The question is, Could He have sinned or not? While we in this study do not have occasion or space to discuss this question fully, yet we praise God the divine human Saviour never sinned. He manifested to all men that He is a sufficient Saviour from sin because He Himself, though in human form, passed through these great temptations without sin. It is our great privilege to have Christ so formed in us that we may constantly claim Him as the victorious One in our lives when we are in the presence of temptation.

I. The Occasion of the Temptation. Luke 4: 1, 2

Verse 1. "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit had descended upon Christ immediately after His baptism. "Was led by the Spirit." The imperfect tense used here indicates that Jesus was continually led of the Spirit. This one verb gives us a clue to the victorious life of Christ. He was always occupied with the things of the Spirit. Mark says, "Immediately the Spirit driveth him" or hurrieth Him forth. He was, by the Spirit, thrust into temptation. We note that He did not seek it Himself and hence was in no sense presumptuous. This should be the character of our conduct always with reference to temptation. Unless impelled by the Spirit of God, it is not brave, but foolhardy, to go into the presence of temptation. "Wilderness." This word indicates the solitude of

Jesus. He was absent from any possible human companionship or aid. Mark says He was "with wild beasts." Thus He was left alone to fight through.

Verse 2. "Forty days tempted." It is quite probable that during the entire period He was constantly, or from time to time, tempted by the devil. We need not presume that this was the first time Jesus was ever tempted, but it is quite evident that Satan struck his hardest blows during these days and likely the three peculiar temptations cited in this section of Scripture were the *final*. "The devil." The Greek word means slanderer or accuser and conveys the idea of deceit, calumny and accusation. From other Scriptures, such as Jude 6, we gather that he is a created being of a very high order but fallen from God. He was once in heaven (2 Peter 2:4). He can assume an inviting appearance (2 Cor. 11:13). He is very powerful (Eph. 6:12) and is bent upon the destruction of man, whom he blinds (2 Cor. 4:4). The question is sometimes raised as to whether the temptation of Christ was objective or subjective. If it were objective, then Satan actually took Him to the pinnacle of the temple and enabled Him to have an outline view of the kingdoms of the world. If it were subjective, Satan brought these things to His consciousness. The common view is that Satan actually appeared to Jesus. We are sure that he did not appear to Him as Satan but rather as an angel of light. Satan comes to each of us, not as Appolyon came to Bunyan's pilgrim, but he comes to us in attractive garb. Peloubet says that he comes not in the sparkle of the wine cup, but in the dregs.

II. The Three Temptations

1. The Temptation to Physical Appetite (2-4)

Verse 2. "He did eat nothing." The Cambridge Bible says that in times of intense spiritual exaltation, the ordinary needs of the body are almost suspended. He did not feel hungry. Godet says this follows from the words "He afterward hungered." There have been instances of forty day fasts other than this. "He afterward hungered." Reaction began and hunger seized Him. It was for this

moment that Satan had been waiting. He seized what seems to him to be his opportunity of shipwrecking the hope of the race.

Verse 3. "The devil said." Satan made his severest attacks when Jesus was weakest. He is not a fair opponent, but attacks us when we are weary, sick, troubled, disheartened or nervously depleted. "If thou be the son of God." The original indicates that this was sarcasm on the part of Satan. The verse might be quoted, "Since you are the son of God," that is, "Since you are so sure you are, command this stone," etc. Satan was challenging Christ in the time of His physical weakness. "This stone . . . bread." Farrar says that there were stones there the exact shape of little loaves of bread. One might superficially think that nothing would have been wrong in the doing of this on the part of Jesus, but since Christ had voluntarily submitted to all the conditions under which we are, He could not assume a divine prerogative on such an occasion, but rather as a man, depended upon God for the things necessary to support His life. Had He done what Satan suggested, He would have given the lie to the reality of His humanity.

Verse 4. "It is written." Someone has said that when Jesus uttered His first word of His public ministry, He used the Word of God as an instrument. "If Christ," as Lightfoot says, "made the Scripture His rule, though He had the fulness of the Spirit above measure," how much more ought we to rightly divide and fully depend upon the sure word of prophecy as our weapon of defence. "Man shall not live by bread alone." Other things are just as important and more so than bread. It is better not to eat bread at all than to do it through the violation of the principles of honesty, truth and holiness. When we think of how Eve ate of the forbidden fruit because it was shown to be "good for food," and when we contemplate how the race has yielded to "the lust of the flesh," we the more appreciate the divine Son of God who came in human form. How eager we should be to appropriate Him lest we, to simply gratify an appetite, commit great sin. "By every word of God." The reference here is probably to the fact that we should recognize our dependence upon the

will of God as expressed through His Word. When God speaks it is done and His word will mean that we are given food from heaven even as the Israelites were given manna. Then He, through His Word, sustains us spiritually, and it is more important that we live spiritually than physically. We praise God that Jesus conquered and we realize the pertinency of John's exhortation that we are not to love the world, which includes the things that satisfy the lust of the flesh.

2. The Temptation to Covetousness (5-8)

Verse 5. "The devil taketh him up into a high mountain." Whether Jesus literally went up or was taken up in spirit, the vision must have been supernatural. "Showed him all the kingdoms." Godet says, "It is not said that Jesus really saw all the kingdoms . . . but that Satan showed them to Him in instantaneous succession by a diabolical phantasmagoria. He had seen so many great men succumb to a similar mirage that he might well hope to prevail again by this means."

Verse 6. "All this power will I give thee." Can we imagine what wealth, rank, military and governmental power was represented in this scene? Satan doubtless hoped that Jesus as Messianic monarch would undertake to use these powers to set up an earthly kingdom. More than one great world monarch has been brought under the domination of his Satanic majesty. "The glory of them." In this temptation Satan practically offered Christ the whole world. Jesus must have known, as He could have known even from prophecy, that one day He would rule the world. How we admire the strength of His patience in that He was willing to bide His time rather than attempt to grasp something within His reach prematurely. Had Jesus taken up the offer of Satan, He would have pleased the Jews, who were looking for Him as the Messiah to set up a temporal kingdom. Let Jesus be our example in that we want nothing until God's time, and when His time comes, no one can keep us from having what we should receive. "That is delivered unto me." This was actually a lie. The fact was that Satan had usurped the rulership of the world by

getting into the hearts of the rulers of temporal kingdoms. Ellicott says, "The rulers of the world, its Herods and its Cæsars, seem to have attained their eminence by trampling the laws of God under foot and accepting the devil as the lord and master of the world." A knowledge of Satan's power enables us to understand how wicked men often prosper for a time. This was an enigma to David until he went into the sanctuary of the Most High.

Verse 7. "Worship me." It is certainly clear that Satan did not simply mean that Jesus was to bow in his presence and perform a bald act of worship, but rather he wanted Christ to yield to his plan and look up to him with an inward reverence. "Satan," says Peloubet, "is too shrewd to insist on form if he can gain the heart." The form may follow, however. Many men worship Satan by worshipping money, fame, or even pleasure. The Scriptures state that we cannot serve God and mammon. Hence if we serve anything else than God, we are serving the enemy of God, that is, the devil.

Verse 8. "Get thee behind me"; that is, stand out of my way. "It is written." Jesus again uses the Word of God. "Thou shalt worship the Lord." The first and greatest commandment. God has made the world and man in His own glory. When man worships anything else then the whole system is thrown out of joint. When man worships God, things are right. Heaven will be perfect because there all will honor and worship God.

3. The Temptation to Pride (9-13)

Verse 9. "The pinnacle of the temple." Probably the southern portico which looked down at a fearful height of about 600 feet into the valley of Hinnon. Josephus says that the eye looked down from it into an abyss. "If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down." This would have been a spectacular performance and would have attracted the attention of the Jews. The temptation is quite clear when we consider that had Jesus been borne up on angels' wings in such a temptation, natural pride would have been gratified. Satan was tempting Jesus to be presumptuous in order that He might glorify Himself and so yield to the

"pride of life." The Jews would the more likely be ready to accept Him as king if they would witness His performing this unusual feat. Satan often assails the believer by prompting him to undertake that which is not based upon good sense or faith.

Verse 10. "He shall give His angels charge over thee." Satan also quotes the Scripture from Psalm 91:11, but he misapplies it. Jesus knew that He was not warranted in claiming God's care if He did something out of the will and plan of the Father. Satan today uses the Scripture, but we should beware of his application of it.

Verse 12. "It is said." From the Word of God, Jesus showed that Satan had misapplied the Scripture.

Verse 13. "When the devil had ended all the temptation." When he had used all his wiles to worst the divine Son of God, but had signally failed. "Departed from him for a season." The original indicates until a convenient opportunity had afforded. Satan did not leave Jesus finally. In Gethsemane he met Him again. The believer must not conclude if he has had a great victory that he will never again be tempted or tested. Satan will come in different guises and on different occasions.

§ 21. John's Testimony Before the Priests and Levites. John 1: 19-28.

John the Baptist was a challenging figure. He was not a Pharisee, for he dwelt not on externalism in religion. He was not of the Essenes, the ascetics of his day, who emphasized "merely material purism." He taught a doctrine of inwardness and reality. He *prepared the way* for true worshippers who worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

Evidently John had a knowledge of the Messiah as revealed by Isaiah the Prophet, whom he quotes in verse 23. When we contemplate that John had an ideal gathered from Isaiah's conception of Him who was to come (cf. Isa. 9:6; 42; 52; 13; 53 and 61) we readily understand that "This explains that the greatest of those born of women was also the most humble, the most retiring, and self-forgetful. In a picture such as that which filled his vision there was no room for self."—*Edersheim.* To John the suggestion that

he was the Christ must have sounded blasphemous. He finally asserts that he is not worthy to perform that "meanest office which a slave could discharge"; viz., the unloosing of the latchets of Christ's shoes.

The questions of this delegation have been looked upon as a series of temptations to John, even as Christ met many temptations in the wilderness, and John did not yield as Christ did not. When he would not admit he was Christ then he was forced to face the fact that he was not Elijah nor even "the prophet." He was simply "a voice."

Now as to John being Elijah, the angelic announcement had said "He shall go before him in the power and spirit of Elias" (Luke 1:17). And as Jesus sadly reviewed John's life He said, "Elias is already come, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed" (Mat. 17:12). But the Jews did not recognize and receive John as Elijah. So he could not "restore all things." The Elijah of Ahab's day sought an *outward* restoration. But "the spirit and power" of Elijah of the New Testament sought an *inward* restoration. Penitence was demanded. So though John was "Divinely Elijah," he was *not* really Elijah *to Israel*—and this is the meaning of the words of Jesus: "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" (Mat. 11:14).

Then there was the expectation of "that prophet" foretold in Deut. 18:15, 18. But John flatly denied claim even to this humbler title.

When asked why he baptized if he were neither Christ, nor Elijah, nor the "prophet," John simply asserted that he baptized in water but a greater than he was in their very midst known by John to baptize with the Holy Ghost (John 1:33).

§ 22. Jesus, the Lamb of God. John 1: 29-34.

Here is the witness of John the Baptist that Jesus is the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John sees in Him the Antitype of all those sacrifices outlined in the sacrificial systems. But best of all John recognizes that through Him the dark curtain of sin, that hides God's face from the world, will be rolled back. He

sees in Christ the "Scape-goat of the race" (verse 29). Then John reminds his hearers (verse 30) that he had prophesied of Him whom he now points out. He had referred to Him as a man (aner), a hero, an outstanding character, who though six months younger than John and subsequent to him in beginning His ministry, yet this Jesus "has become" before John, for says John, He was "first in regard of me." This is the Baptist's way of magnifying Christ. Then amazing words, John says (verse 31), "I knew him not." Though they had been cousins yet their lives had been lived apart that John's testimony might have greater weight. John's whole ministry of baptizing with water, however, was to the intent that Jesus might be manifest to Israel. Then (verses 32-34) John gives his personal testimony as to Christ based upon a revelation vouchsafed to him at Jesus' baptism. The dove form of the Spirit descended out of heaven and on Jesus abode, and although John had not known Him in life so as to have the fact of His Messiahship dawn on him, yet he was assured that Jesus was the Son of God because of His heavenly phenomenon. For He that had sent John to baptize with water had said unto him, "Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit." The dove from heaven was a supernatural revelation to John that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

§ 23. The First Three Disciples. John 1: 35-42.

Edersheim makes something of the days of these events. He believes that the interview between John and the Sanhedrin took place on Thursday. On Friday John first testified to the "Lamb of God." The following day Jesus appeared a second time, and the two disciples followed Him. This was *Saturday, Jewish Sabbath.* Then on Sunday, the next day, Jesus returned to Galilee, calling others along the way. The significance of this is all clear. "The Friday of John's first pointing to Jesus as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, recalls that other Friday, when the full import of that testimony appeared." Cruci-

fixion Day, our "Good Friday." The Sabbath symbolizes the old economy, closes the ministry of John and opens that of Jesus (John 1:35, 36). Two of John's disciples take leave of John and follow their new Master. Then follows Sunday, when Christ begins His active ministry (John 1:43).

It is interesting to observe how perfectly naturally Andrew and John (for he is the other one of the "two" disciples referred to in verse 37) went after Jesus, whom they recognized as Master, Rabbi or Teacher. "Come and ye shall see" was a rabbinnic formula. By it Jesus admitted them to His teaching.

Andrew lost no time in finding his brother Simon and in bringing him to Jesus, who scrutinized him closely and then gave him that name (Cephas, Peter) of which he ultimately became worthy. Andrew will always be the classical example of one who, though not prominent nor gifted himself, yet because he leads a brother to Christ who is greatly used, deserves praise and receives reward.

§ 24. Philip and Nathanael. John 1: 43-51.

Jesus decided to leave the Jordan for Galilee. He found Philip and bade him follow Him. Philip was of the same town as Andrew and Peter and like Andrew he sought out his own brother. His announcement, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph," must have startled Nathanael, who naively asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" To which question Philip confidently replied "Come and see."

Rather than being against Nathanael it was to his credit that he hesitated long enough to question Philip. Conjecture that Nathanael was looking for the Messiah. Would you have supposed that he would have expected a Messiah to come from Nazareth? And then to make the anti-climax yet more striking Philip had announced Him as the "son of Joseph." But Nathanael was willing to be shown. He was open for evidence. He approaches Jesus, who sees in him guilelessness. He is frank. Nathanael soon inter-

rogates the Master as though to test Him. His "Whence knowest thou me?" is met with the prompt and, to Nathanael, surprising reply, "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." This was enough for the frank Nathanael. At once he made his confession of faith. He saw and said he was in the presence of Him of whom he had heard. He addressed Him as "Rabbi . . . son of God . . . king of Israel." He was at once teacher, Deity and monarch. Then Jesus explained to Nathanael how He saw the ground of his faith but that he would yet see greater things than these. There was yet much to be revealed to the unbiased mind of the unprejudiced Nathanael. He would see the "Son of Man" as the avenue of communication between heaven and earth. Nathanael saw Him as Rabbi, King and Son of God. He was all this but He was just as truly Son of Man and as the God-man, the Bridge of the chasm between heaven above and earth beneath. So as Jacob realized because of the ladder vision, that God was in the place, so Nathanael was yet to know that through Jesus angels, messengers, communications were passing from earth to heaven and back again. All worship is through Christ. All prayers are offered in His name. We are accepted in the Beloved.

Dr. Griffith Thomas uses John 1:51 as the basis for a message on "The Need, Means, Safety and Freedom of Communication Between God and Man." His points are:

1. Jesus Christ, a Man—Sympathy.
2. Jesus Christ, a Perfect Man—Sinlessness.
3. Jesus Christ, Died—Sacrifice.
4. Jesus Christ, Rose—Common Sense Argument. (What became of the body?)
5. Jesus Christ, Ascended—"A Saviour, not quite God, is a Bridge broken at the other (Father's) end."

§ 25. The First Miracle: Water Made Wine. John 2:1-11.

Nathanael, the naive Galilean, had confessed that Jesus was "Rabbi," "Son of God," and "King of Israel." Nathanael had recognized the greatness of Christ because the

Master had said, "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee" (John 1:48). But Jesus informed Nathanael that there were yet greater things to see and speaking of Himself used the name, *"Son of Man"* (John 1:51).

At the marriage feast of Cana we see Jesus both as Son of Man and also as God. He is here, on the occasion of His first miracle, very clearly the God-man,—He is God in power; He is a man in His gracing the wedding and mingling with His fellows at this occasion of gladness.

We cannot but think of Him here in striking contrast to the ascetic John the Baptist. Possibly His attendance upon such occasions gave the whimsical, childish generation, that saw only superficially, an occasion to contrast Christ with John. "For John came neither eating nor drinking and they say, 'He hath a devil.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say, 'Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.'" Jesus made it evident that He "became man." As P. Whitwell Wilson in *The Christ We Forget* says, "Those who met Him in the flesh never doubted that He was Man. They brought Him food and begged Him to eat, and they put a pillow for Him that He might sleep in the boat," etc.

That Jesus should have been at the Wedding Feast was quite natural. He, with His newly chosen disciples, had come from Bethabara to Nazareth and Cana of Galilee. The former place was His own home and the latter that of Nathanael. His mother attended the wedding. Nathanael, a prominent citizen, was invited and why should not Jesus, the Rabbi, attend? For a wedding was more than festivities and merriment. Before it the pious fasted. Indeed it was "almost a sacrament" with the Jews. Entrance into the marriage state was thought by some to carry with it forgiveness of sins. Then in the background of the consciousness of every Jew there was the conception that Jehovah was the Groom of Israel just as we today refer as Christians to Christ and His Bride.

"To use the bold allegory of the times, God Himself had spoken the words of blessing over the cup at the union of our first parents, when Michael and Gabriel acted as grooms-

men, and the angelic choir sang the wedding hymn."—*Edersheim.*

So a wedding combined sanctity and gladness. It was preceded by the betrothal, which was practically as binding as the wedding. It was advised that a betrothed couple should marry in twelve months. The Scripture used to show that "engagements" should terminate in marriage within a year was Prov. 13 : 12. "Hope" should not be "deferred" lest the *heart* become *sick.*

The wedding procession was quite a pageant, at the close of which the contract or Kethubah was signed. The bridegroom promised "to work for, honor, keep and care for his bride," and to give her 200 Zuz (about $30). The cup was filled and a solemn prayer of bridal benediction was offered. Then there followed the feast, to which all present made some contribution "sometimes coarsely, sometimes wisely, to the general enjoyment."

At such a feast "the wine failed" (verse 3). Mary informed Jesus of the embarrassment, and was met with, "Woman what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." On such occasions it was regarded as a "meritorious work of charity" to provide wine. Was the mother of Jesus simply getting her Son to contribute some wine? Rather more than that. She was eagerly awaiting His "hour." Some have ventured that she saw in this lack of wine an opportunity for "His Royal Messianic manifestation." But Jesus did not go into collusion with her on the matter, nor should His reply to her be interpreted as a rebuff. We cannot imagine anything discourteous in the conduct of Christ and least of all towards His mother, though a *sword was to pierce her heart.* Probably Jesus had performed no miracles prior to this. His mother really expected to see some manifestation at any time. She had confidence as well as pride in her Son "conceived by the Holy Ghost." She knew His origin. Yet she was likely "taken back" when He answered her with "What to me and to thee, woman?" What have we in common in this matter, Lady? It was as she had heard in the temple eighteen years earlier, "Wist ye not that I must be about my *Father's business?*" Mary knew His meekness and home-submis-

sion. She could not be blamed for expecting a continuation of that. Yet she had to learn what we, who are related to Him in a spiritual way, must learn, that "Father's business" comes first. So there was nothing "harsh or derogatory" in the utterance of Jesus. He was simply taking the stand He later held. (See Mat. 12:46-50.)

What Mary herself faced as an insoluble problem was what has perplexed theologians down through the centuries; viz., *the nature of Christ.* We say He was the *God-man* and marvel at the "mystery of Godliness." In the early centuries of the Church Athanasius, Arius, Apollinaris, Nestorius, Cyril, Eutychus and others disputed over His nature. Church councils dogmatized and anathematized over this question. Hearts ached and heads swimmed. Yet He is still the marvel of the universe. New *Lives of Christ* are written. Each age or generation views Him in its own background. Yet He baffles all as He did Mary, His mother.

At her bidding the servants were ready to comply with His wish which was "Fill the water-pots with water." These huge jars used for purifying dishes and hands contained about seventeen gallons each. They filled six of them "to the brim." This made the miracle evident and without question. *No essence of wine* was in the bottom of those jars. "The servants which had drawn the water knew." They saw the sparkling water run over the *brim.* It was water, not wine. But, referring to the narrative, something happened between verses 7 and 8. When they *drew* out it was wine not water, and according to the ruler of the feast "good wine." So *good* was it that the *ruler* indulged in a proverbial joke. Here was something unusual, good wine at the close of the feast "when men had drunk freely."

This is like Jesus. He provides the good, the satisfying. He takes the water of our lives, our knowledge, our works, our prayers, our almsgiving, and He makes it wine. Our best is insipid, tasteless unless He transmute it into wine. Let us "fill the water pots to the brim." He can bless *much learning, great wealth, long prayers, large gifts.* Throw all thy powers into the jar that He is about to bless. "With

His divine alchemy He turns common things into radiant mysteries; yea, every meal into a eucharist and the jaws of the sepulchre into an outgoing gate."—*MacDonald.*

By this miracle "Jesus manifested His glory." Little wonder that "His disciples believed on Him." They saw and believed. Does not the record of this miracle stir our hearts to new, more active faith?

§ 26. Sojourn in Capernaum. John 2: 12.

Apparently Capernaum was the "chief home" of Jesus after He entered on His active work. On this occasion He stayed only a few days, for the Feast of the Passaver was at hand.

PART III

The Early Judean Ministry

THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY

From the Public Appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem Until His Return to Galilee

§ 27. First Cleansing of the Temple John 2: 13-22.

It seems fitting that Jesus should have begun His ministry with a cleansing of the temple. Some have argued that it was "abrupt" or "tactless" in Jesus to begin His ministry as John 2 describes and so believe that Matthew 21, Mark 11 and Luke 19 refer to the same event as John 2. Luther was among these. But Edersheim is quite convinced that the "cleansing" belongs here. He says, "It is not only profane, but unhistorical, to look for calculation and policy in the life of Jesus. Had there been such He would not have died on the cross." This position takes it for granted that Jesus was about His Father's *business* as at the age of twelve. He was ridding His Father's house of a nefarious traffic. It had become a "den of robbers." He was fulfilling the prophecy of Mal. 3: 1-3 (q.v.). A description of the crowd in the court of the Gentiles when Christ cleansed the temple is given by Giovanni Papini:

"The dealers trampling in the mud test the flanks of the animals intended for sacrifice, and cry out in monotonous voices to the women who are come for purification after child birth, to the pilgrims come to offer a sacrifice of importance, and to the lepers who must offer live birds for their healing. The money lenders, who may be recognized by a coin they wear suspended from one ear, run their long and clutching fingers with voluptuous enjoyment through the shining, jingling heaps of coins before them; the agents wriggle in and out among the groups; men from the provinces, tight fisted and wary, hold long confabulations before untying their purse strings and handing over small coins in payment of their offerings; and from time to time the bellowing of an impatient ox drowns alike the plaintive bleating of the lambs, the high-pitched voices of the women, and the jingling of minae and shekels."

Though He with His scourge of cords drove out sheep and oxen and "poured into their receptacles the changers' money and overthrew their tables" yet no hand was raised against Him. He must have met with a silent response on the part of a knowing yet a remiss multitude who let the avaricious Priesthood go on. If others lacked executive power He did not. He could not be accused of *moral laziness*. To Renan's characterization of this as "a sudden, ill-advised outburst of ill-humor," Edersheim replies, "It was a scene worth witnessing by any true Israelite, a protest and an act which, even among a less emotional people, would have gained Him respect, approbation and admiration and which, at any rate, secured His safety."

What Jesus condemned, but the Priesthood condoned, was the transforming of the temple into a market, in which boisterousness and unfair dealing prevailed. This went by the board with some because it was convenient to get exact change for the purchasing of articles needful for the feast in the way of sacrifices and what went with them, but the traffic brought in "the weighing of coins, deductions for loss of weight, arguing, disputing, bargaining." Poor people who came to offer their sacrifices were taken advantage of. On one occasion a pair of pigeons was run up to 15s. 3d, or $3.71.

This market was doubtless "what in Rabbinic writings is styled 'the bazaars of the sons of Annas' . . . who is infamous in New Testament History." Owing to this traffic being so unpopular that the indignation of the people swept it away three years before the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus could do what He did. Josephus describes Annas, son of Annas of the New Testament, as "a great hoarder up of money."

So the Jews, fearful of creating a tumult if they interrupted Christ and desiring also to appeal to the multitude, asked Him for a "sign" (verse 18). In this hateful, yet cowardly cunning, Jesus foresaw that which would send Him to the Cross, so He answered as we read in John 2:19. The Jews missed His meaning, but the disciples remembered His words after the resurrection (John 2:22). His "sign" is His Victory though He was crucified.

§ 28. Discourse With Nicodemus. John 2:23-3:21.

At the occasion of this feast of Passover Jesus did miracles besides "cleansing the temple." These miracles arrested the people and caused "many to believe on His name, beholding His *signs*" (John 2:23). Yet Jesus did not confide in men for the very good reason that He knew it was unsafe so to do (John 2:24, 25).

Jesus perceived what has been called "Imperfect attachment to Christ" (John 12:9).—*W. L. Watkinson.*

INTRODUCTION:

People attached to Christ not altogether actuated by faith and devotion.

1. But some are moved by *curiosity.*
   "See Lazarus."
   Hear of unknown worlds from him.
   Christ a Prophet rather than Saviour.
2. Influenced by *custom.*
   Fashion to be interested in Christ. John 12:12-19.
   "Everybody's doing it."
3. Decided by *interest.*
   Christ healed and fed.
   A lumber dealer sees so many feet of "Timber" rather than beauties of the forest.
4. Charmed by *taste.*
   "Moral excellence" of Christ perceived.
   Above "imperfect attachments" may be "starting points" in the Christian life but starting only.

Benjamin Franklin offered a lodging to Whitefield who said, "If you have done it for Christ's sake, you'll not lose your reward." Franklin replied, "I have not done it for Christ's sake but for your sake."

Why are we in the Church?
For Christ's sake?

We note with interest that Christ's miracles attracted and won for Him recognition. Nowadays we hear much in re-

gard to miracles. Many men today question the Scripture narrative simply because it contains miracles. What they cannot explain by their own "rules" and "formulas" and "test tubes" they will not concede to. But what is there in the mind of man that warrants his claiming the right to pass final judgment on the workings of God? Yet men have so attacked the miraculous in the Christian religion that what used to be the bulwark of our evidence, miracles, has to some become a "charge" which we must defend.

We rest, with Robert J. Drummond, in the conviction that "you cannot separate the miraculous from Jesus Christ." With Him miracles are natural throughout. Peter expressed the inevitableness of His resurrection in the words, "It is not possible that He should be holden of death."

Jesus came with "words" and with "works." When they withstood His words He trusted they would believe "for the work's sake." And *yet* men need the works. Edersheim says, "They approached the moral and spiritual through the miraculous; we the miraculous through the moral and spiritual." True it is that if the *miraculous* should become the *ordinary* the attractive power of the miracle would be lessened, if not lost. God may be believed in as well as Christ by a simple record of miracles, yet many, many today need the supernatural manifestation to make the message obvious.

Nicodemus was among those who had seen Christ's miracles. So this strict Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin, the highest ecclesiastical tribunal of the nation, "came unto Him by night."

Nicodemus has been variously estimated. S. D. Gordon in an article on "The Master's Ideal Christian," emphasizes his *timidity* on this occasion, and his *fairness* but *feebleness* when he asked the Sanhedrin the question of John 7:51. Wilson in "The Christ We Forget" writes "Peter, the fisherman, was ready to fling himself openly at the Saviour's feet, whereas Nicodemus, the politician, came to Him by night, as if he must calculate consequences before publicly associating himself with a Teacher sent from God. Jesus believed not in night work but in day work. He suspected every deed of darkness. The cowardice of Nicodemus. . . ."

And again, "This one timid trimmer stood forth alone." Here reference is to John 7:51. Yet Wilson allows that Nicodemus learned from Jesus and admires his coming forth with Joseph of Arimathea to "honor a Friend, now defeated and discredited, and so taking his place on the losing side." But this heroic deed was because "Christ had made a man of him, had cured his cowardice and corrected his opportunism."

But Edersheim, who, in the judgment of the writer, speaks more advisedly, says, "It is altogether rash to speak of the manner of his first approach to Christ as most commentators have done. We can scarcely realize the *difficulties* he had to overcome. It must have been a mighty power of conviction, to break down prejudice so far as to lead this old Sanhedrist to acknowledge a Galilean, untrained in the Schools, as a "Teacher come from God," and to repair to Him for direction on, perhaps, the most delicate and important point of Jewish theology. But, even so, we cannot wonder that he should have wished to shroud his first visit in the utmost possible secrecy. It was a most compromising step for a Sanhedrist to take."

Doubtless not all their conversation is here recorded. Nicodemus recognized that He was "a teacher come from God" because of His miracles. He also addressed the Master most respectfully as *Rabbi.* Jesus was not excited nor was He unmanned in the least by His visitor from the Great Sanhedrin. He simply talked to Nicodemus frankly and helpfully. As a Pharisee Nicodemus "believed in a future state, studied the Scriptures, and was looking for the Messiah, whom he expected to be a temporal deliverer and king." He looked for the Kingdom of God but Jesus most emphatically introducing His utterance with "Verily, verily" (Amen, amen), said "except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." Would Nicodemus come to where "God reigns as king . . . where His will is law, and men obey it as naturally as they breathe, and where all His subjects are formed in His holy image, and inspired with His spiritual life," then he must "be born *from above.*" Now "the Jewish view of the *second birth* was the *consequence* of having taken upon oneself 'the

Kingdom'; not as Jesus put it, the *cause* and the *condition* of it." Judaism knew nothing of a "moral renovation, a spiritual birth, as the initial condition for reformation, far less as that for seeing the kingdom of God." Prof. Drummond, in his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" illustrates this truth by the scientic doctrine of Biogenesis. "Only by means of new life imparted to it from a higher life can any object rise into the kingdom above it." The plant life takes to itself of the mineral kingdom and imparts to it vegetable life. The vegetable kingdom cannot be changed into the animal kingdom except through the imparting to it of animal life. "Each lower kingdom must be *born from that above.*" God's spiritual life given to our souls makes us children of God.

Nicodemus knew only of the natural birth, hence his question of verse 4. Jesus' reply (verse 5) informed Nicodemus that entrance into the Kingdom of God was conditioned by birth of the water and of the Spirit. Commenting on this passage Abbott says, "Governing ourselves by the cardinal canon, that we are to understand Christ as Christ expected His auditor to understand Him, it cannot be difficult to understand this declaration. The Jewish proselyte, as a sign that he put off his old faith, was baptized on entering the Jewish Church. John the Baptist, employing the symbolic rite, baptized Jew as well as Gentile, as a sign of purification by repentance from past sins. Nicodemus, then, would certainly have understood by Christ's expression, "born of water," a reference to this rite of baptism, and by the expression, "born of the Spirit," a reference to a new spiritual life. The declaration is then that no man can enter the Kingdom of God except by (1) a public acknowledgment and confession of sin, a public putting off of the old man and entering into the new; and (2) a real and vital change of life and character wrought by the Spirit of God in the heart of the believer. By the one act he enters into the visible and external kingdom, by the other into the spiritual and invisible kingdom." This in general is the position taken by evangelical Christians on this passage. A parallel passage is Titus 3 : 5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he

saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Then in verse 6 Christ lays down the fundamental principle that "like produces like." Flesh produces flesh and Spirit begets spirit. Yet is it the rule "each after its kind." The inference is necessary that only the spiritual enter the Kingdom of God. To the marvelling Sanhedrist Jesus likened the Spirit's operation to the wind that maybe was "whistling" on that dark night. The *fact* and *results* of the wind are evident but the *cause* and *methods* of its working are invisible and perhaps mysterious.

Jesus' question, "Art thou a teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?" must have come as a rebuke to the authoritative and scholarly Nicodemus. His ignorance was indicative of the spiritual plight of Israel, so bound by traditions, yet so dense to spiritual teaching or even the literal Old Testament meaning.

Then that Teacher "who spoke as never man spake" declared that He spake from knowledge, not from hearsay or theory (verse 11). Yet His *witness* was not *received.* He had spoken to Nicodemus of "earthly things"—the new birth, baptism, spiritual quickening—yet Nicodemus believed not. The Master's argument was "Since I told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" Nicodemus and his type had been refusing to believe and act upon what Christ had taught as duty and practice. The implication was that if they refused to believe the "earthly things," they would not believe the "heavenly."

Then in verse 13 Christ asserts His own authority. He knew of the *how* as well as the *what.* Yet Nicodemus, like all others, must take a step of faith. He must "trust where he could not trace." He must be "born of water and the Spirit." He must look up to Christ as a Saviour as well as a Teacher. As the bitten Israelites looked at the serpents so Nicodemus must look to the Son of Man (See Numbers 21:4-9). *Faith* to gaze upon the brazen serpent, symbolical of the cause of their poisoned death-doomed condition, meant life for bitten Israelites; faith to look to the Son of Man, who one day was to bear our sins in His body on the

tree, would mean life to all who looked. Jesus taught Nicodemus the simple way of faith, repentance, baptism and spiritual quickening. Even when Christ was on earth His followers received in anticipation the merits of the crucified Christ. Those in Moses' day who were filled with poison of serpents looked upon a serpent and lived; in our day those filled with the poison of sin look upon "Him . . . who was made sin for us"; and live spiritually. This is God's wonderful provision which has sprung out of His love (John 3:16). Anyone may believe and have eternal life. For this cause Christ came into the world, not to leave the world downcast but lifted up. He was not first and foremost a *Judge* but a *Saviour* (Luke 19:10). Rejection of the Son of Man is to be condemned (verse 18). Christ's presence in the world as the "light of the world" has made all mankind to be without excuse. As Nicodemus sought the light of Christ in the night so all should come to Him "the Light of the world," yet not to leave unenlightened spiritually but *quickened* and bearers of the word of life.

"Light received increaseth light,
Light rejected bringeth night."

§ 29. Christ Baptizing in Judea. John 3:22-24.

There has been much conjecturing as to why Jesus, through His disciples, baptized (John 4:12). Edersheim says, "When the Baptist was about to be forsaken, betrayed and murdered (this) was Christ's highest testimony to him. Jesus adopted his Baptism, ere its waters forever ceased to flow, and thus He blessed and consecrated them. He took up the work of His forerunner, and continued it. The baptismal rite of John, administered with the sanction of Jesus, was the highest witness that could be born to it."

John was baptizing at the same time as Christ at a place of "much water." For that "Monster of Iniquity," as Whitwell Wilson describes Herod, had not yet cast John into prison. But John's work was nearing a close, for Herod, the Idumean, descendant of Esau, was not content to have slaughtered babes and his own kin. He imprisoned the great prophet John because John rebuked him, and he would not be rebuked.

Jesus was a descendant of Jacob and a first-born, yet He never longed for temporal power as did Jacob. In Herod, however, Esau wreaked vengeance for the wrong done him by the Supplanter Jacob. On this P. Whitwell Wilson writes so well that I beg to quote him: "When Jesus was born it seemed as if the soldiers of Edom were triumphing everywhere over the civilians of Israel; but . . . Jesus devoted Himself not to the profession of arms, but to a manual industry; and, against all appearances, declared that it is the meek who will inherit the earth. History has justified His wisdom. Commerce has proved more powerful than capture and conquest. The Jews have no army, no navy, no frontiers, no fortresses. But they continue as a nation richer today and more powerful than at any time in their long and checkered history, while Edom is an evil memory. Her rock-hewn fastnesses, once so formidable, are haunts for the beasts of the desert." On Herod, Wilson writes: "Like his great ancestor, Esau, when he despised his birthright, Herod was at the point of death; and every man who is conscious of that dread enemy's approach is also near to God. For the sake of the last shreds of his power, this "profane" man threw away the everlasting fame which would have been his if he had bowed the knee to One who could pardon even him. He knew that the stars cannot lie. He believed the Prophets. But instead of bequeathing his throne to Jesus, he fought blindly for the survival of his vested interest, and bartered his soul for a mess of pottage. In the annals of error, there is no more pitiful picture than this of a king who fought for a throne, only to murder his heir; built a temple, but killed the high priest; consummated a brilliant marriage, but slew his wife; massacred his subjects to strengthen his dynasty—including the slaughter of infants under two years old, in order to ease that one faded life of his which had less than two years to run." In Herod we see personified the evil of a monarchy when the wrong man is on the throne and in power. But Jesus did not denounce the Herods. He suffered in their stead and thus displayed that "mercy" which "is enthroned in the heart of kings, . . . an attribute to God Himself."

§ 30. John's Testimony to Christ at Aenon. John 3: 25-36.

John's disciples, jealous of Jesus, and perturbed because of the evident loss of prestige on the part of their teacher, hurried to John with the word that "He . . . to whom thou hast borne witness . . . baptizeth and all men come to him." John's simple reply was, "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." He implied that Jesus' ministry was a gift of heaven. He reaffirmed "I am not the Christ." His office he defined as "The friend of the bridegroom." He was the "Best Man" eager to do the bidding of the groom. He cared for nothing so much as the heavenly Bridegroom's success and happiness. When the voice of the Bridegroom sounded joyful the "friend" was happy (verse 29). When John saw that Jesus did well his joy was *"fulfilled."* He simply counted or reckoned that "He must increase but I must decrease."

John had received a revelation that Jesus was the Son of God. He knew he was Christ's forerunner and was ready to have his sun sink as that of Christ rose. No coterie of followers could tempt him to jealousy or arouse in him an unwarranted ambition. His vision gave him poise. He was no "reed shaken with the wind but a prophet and more than a prophet."

John the Baptist knew that Christ was "above all" whereas his own followers were "of the earth" and *spoke* of *the earth.* Theirs was earthly wisdom. Christ's witness had been rejected by men though He spake "words of God." Yet John saw in Christ Him who had the Spirit *not by measure;* and Him by whom all, who obey, have eternal life; as well as Him whose rejection will be accompanied by God's wrath (John 3:34-36).

§ 31. The Departure From Judea. Mat. 4:12; Mark 1:14; John 4:1-3.

In John's account of Jesus leaving Judea the Pharisees are cited as the reason for His going. Probably Jesus felt that the Pharisees would incite John's disciples to oppose Him. And Jesus, of course, desired no misunderstanding

with John's followers. Then the Master may have left Judea simply to avoid a useless altercation with the Pharisaical party. Clear it is at least that the Pharisees were involved in His starting for Galilee. Thus early in His ministry does Jesus recognize the *antagonism* of this religious group that opposed Him at every turn and, by some, are thought to have spurred Herod on to imprison the Baptist.

§ 32. Discourse With the Woman of Samaria. John 4: 4-26.

The shorter route from Judea to Galilee lay through Samaria and Josephus says that the Galileans ordinarily used this one to go to the capital. So we understand "He must needs pass through Samaria." Edersheim contends that Judaeans usually made a *detour* through Perea to avoid hostile and impure Samaria. Possibly Jesus desired to avoid Perea, the seat of Herod's government. The Samaritans seem to have been much like the Judaeans. Likely when the deportation occurred under Sargon many Israelitish inhabitants were left behind. Fugitives from Assyria fled to Samaria. Apostates from the Jerusalem of Ezra and Nehemiah went to Samaria. Ezra and Nehemiah demanded a strict separation from Samaria because the latter contained elements that had corrupted Judah before the deportation to Babylon.

The Samaritans had a rival temple on Mount Gerizim and Manasseh, forced to leave Jerusalem because of his marriage with the daughter of Sanballat, became High Priest. The Samaritans had their own version of the Pentateuch and in Deut. 27:4 substituted Mount Gerizim for Mount Ebal. So a great antipathy existed between Jews and Samaritans. The latter "tried to desecrate the temple on the eve of the Passover; and they waylaid and killed pilgrims on their road to Jerusalem." The Jews held the Samaritans with contempt and would not recognize them of the same religion and race. The fact that they were so much like the Jews made the feeling more acute. In the "Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs" (2d Century), "Sichem" is the City of Fools. But at Christ's time all Samaritan food was declared lawful, hence Jesus' disciples

brought "bread." Evidently among these Samaritans "Jesus would find a soil better prepared for the Divine Seed, or, at least, less encumbered by the thistles and tares of traditionalism and Pharisaic bigotry." "The parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph" is referred to in Gen. 48:22. Here Joseph was buried (Joshua 24:32). "Jesus being wearied" and sitting "thus;" i. e., *wearily* on the well, reminds us of His humanity. He had travelled during the day. It was now 6 p. m., for John uses the Roman reckoning in stating time. Water drawing was done in the evening.

Jesus, seeing the Samaritan woman, sought her good will by asking her a favor, as Abbott says. Then the woman recognizing either by His dress, language or physiognomy that He was a Jew, wondered at His request, since the Jews and Samaritans were not sociable. Jesus took occasion to speak to her of the "living water" that He had to offer to anyone asking. He was thus using a term familiar to those who knew the Bible (Gen. 26:19; Jer. 2:13), and putting into it a new and spiritual meaning. But the woman misunderstood His allusion and reminded Him of His inability to draw without a "leathern bucket and a line" about 90 feet long. To His apparently boastful suggestion of providing the water she asks Him if He were greater than Jacob from whom the Samaritans probably descended through Joseph and then Ephraim and Manasseh. Finally the surprised woman innocently asked for the "living water" to which He had referred.

Then Jesus asked her to "Go call" her "husband," yet to the woman's answer "I have no husband," Jesus replied, "Thou saidst well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands and he whom thou hast now is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly." The question arises as to how Jesus could have asked her to call her "husband" when He knew as He afterwards said that she had no "husband" at that time. There are different satisfactory answers to this question. First the word used here is *aner,* meaning *man.* Now if we substitute *man* in the account for *husband* the meaning is clear. *Man* has two slightly different meanings which to us *husband* has not. Then Christ may have been "drawing her out" for the moment. Or, and what

seems to the writer the likeliest explanation, Christ called on His divine stock of knowledge only upon need. When He first asked her to call upon her husband He was talking only as a man. Then when the situation demanded it, He drew on omniscience and saw her complete history before Him as clear as a printed page.

She was a "much married" woman and possibly living an illegal life, though Edersheim is inclined to give her the benefit of the doubt and to conclude that she may have been conforming to the law of the land. Whatever the facts were *she* knew that Jesus saw her whole life story as an open book and then she said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."

Her directing the subject to religious externalism, such as the proper place of worship, is interesting and might easily betray her conviction of sin. Her ancestors had worshipped on Mount Gerizim for 400 years. And the Jews had thought of Jerusalem as their center for centuries (1 Kings 8:48; 9:3). But Jesus, eager to get her to face spiritual verities, suggested the fact that they were on the eve of a time when place of worship would not matter. Then He affirmed that "salvation is from the Jews." He has convinced her of His being a Prophet and now He pushes the matter further. He boldly affirms that even the Samaritans must look to the Jews for their Saviour regardless of previous antagonisms. Then He directs her to a consideration of "true" (or "ideal"—*Westcott)* worshippers, who are characterized by worshipping in "spirit and truth." These worship *from the heart* with *a genuineness* which formality has never known.

This Samaritan woman by her statement, "I know that Messiah cometh [which is called the Christ]" (verse 25) disclosed the fact that the Samaritans also looked for the Messiah. Then strange as it may seem to us Jesus directly disclosed to her the fact that He was that very Messiah. His ways are past finding out. He *knows what is in man.* No word of His was wasted.

§ 33. The Gospel in Sychar. John 4: 27-42.

The disciples, coming and finding their Master talking with the woman, marvelled. Their wonder was not that He talked with a Samaritan woman, or that particular Samaritan woman, but that He conversed with any woman in public. The Rabbis said that a man should not talk with even his own wife in public.

Yet not one disciple asked Jesus why He spoke with the woman. Evidently they felt something restraining them in the very looks of Jesus.

Then the woman went into the city leaving her water pots. Various reasons are suggested for this leaving of her pots. (1) It indicated she would return. (2) That Christ might use them.—*Lightfoot.* (3) That she might make the more speed. (4) Because her interview with Christ had so engaged her that she forgot them. Upon her arrival she announced with eagerness, "Come see a man, which told me all things that I did: can this be the Christ?" Her statement indicates that her excitement leads her to exaggerate with reference to the "all things that I did," yet surely she realized that her life to Christ was an *open book.* Her question is of such a form as to demand a negative answer but as Cook says, "Hope bursts through it." Doubtless she felt as do we when we sing "it's almost too good to be true." Verse 30 gives us a very vivid picture of a considerable crowd of nondescript Samaritans leaving the city at once and travelling along the highway towards the well to see this most unusual character so eagerly announced by the woman. One thing is certain about this woman. Folks took her at her word. Her witness to Christ started a procession of those who trusted her veracity towards the Messiah. Would that our service for our Saviour would be so productive of results.

Verse 31 changes the scene. The disciples, solicitous for Jesus' physical welfare, entreated Him to eat. But *He had meat to eat of which they knew nothing.* The disciples could not understand Him, not knowing the source of His supply (verse 33). But said He, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." He

was lost in His work and His mind was brightened and His body refreshed. Have we not felt this in a measure in our own experiences? Have you not been refreshed while at worship or while about the Father's business? "Love lightens labor." A mother, weak and worn, yet cares for her child that is dangerously ill. Even sleep seems unnecessary. When she does sleep it is as we read in the Song of Solomon 5:2, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." So as the Master's enthusiasm for souls was kindled He became careless of provision for His body. But His disciples lacked that keenness of spiritual perception which He had in perfection. Jesus was bent on "doing" His Father's will until He had accomplished His work (verse 34). Did He not look forward to that moment when He would utter "It is finished"? But as yet He saw "fields . . . white unto harvest." The "golden grain" was soon to whiten and then fall to the ground. Reapers were needed.

Then came the Samaritans full of faith through the testimony of the woman. They opened to Him their homes as well as their hearts. "And he abode there two days." They accepted Him as the "Saviour of the world." Unhampered by the traditions and prejudices of Judea, these despised Samaritans believed in Jesus and gave Him their hospitality.

PART IV

First Period of the Galilean Ministry

FIRST PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY

From the Return to Galilee Until the Choosing of the Twelve

§ 34. The Beginning of Christ's Galilean Ministry. Mat. 4: 12 (13-16), 17; Mark 1: 14, 15; Luke 4: 14, 15; John 4: 43-45.

Jesus' statement of John 4 : 44 is one that requires some thought since He was just entering *"His own country."* What did He mean by His *own country?* (1) It has been contended that Judea was *really His own country* but was less hospitable than Galilee, so He went to the latter. With this I disagree. (2) Meyer points out that Galilee was His "country" and that Jesus had gone to Judea and *gotten a reputation* and had returned to His own country afterwards. And now He is known as a prophet. But this does not seem right. (3) Trench thinks that Nazareth was "His own country" and so He went to other Galilean cities. With this I agree. Luke 4 : 24 implies the same. In Galilee Jesus met those that had been at Jerusalem at the Passover Feast and so were prepared to "receive Him having seen all things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast."

§ 35. The Nobleman's Son. John 4: 46-54.

The miracle of turning the water into wine was still fresh in the minds of the residents of Cana of Galilee. Evidently the report of it had travelled to Capernaum 20 or 25 miles distant for "there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum," and "When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down and heal his son." Jesus used the occasion of this request to call for a simple faith not based on *"signs* and wonders." His saying "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe," was the cry of His own soul against the shallow, elementary faith of those about Him. They needed the "sign," mir-

acle, that suggested a supernatural power, that pointed as a "Sign Board" Godward. They needed the "wonder" to arrest their attention, to make them *wonder* as they "kept" in mind what they saw. For "wonder" comes from the verb *tereo,* keep, guard. So Jesus spoke *the word* "Go thy way; thy son liveth." "The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him and he went his way." He acted on his faith without the "sign." He had come for Jesus to go to his house in person, but was content to go upon Jesus' word. His servant's report confirmed his faith in Christ's word. He had learned that *distance* or *space* mattered not to Jesus. His whole house believed with him. Some one must take the initiative. Others follow.

§ 36. First Rejection at Nazareth. Mat. 13: 54-58; Mark 6: 1-6a; Luke 4: 16-30.

The *synagogue* was the result of the captivity. When Israel was in Babylon away from the temple there was felt the need of a place of meeting, hence the synagogue. In this we see how God does make everything to work out for good in His great omniscience and omnipotence.

In studying of the *Preparation of the World for Christianity* we learn that the Jews provided "divine truth and faith." The synagogue, also, was a contribution towards this preparation. Therein, not only Christ, but His disciples, proclaimed the Gospel.

Attendance upon the synagogue was expected from the Jews. Absence meant personal guilt. Effectual prayer could be offered in the synagogue only. The synagogue was "consecrated to God" and could not be used for any other purpose than worship, yet it might be transformed into an *academy.* "Ministers" of the synagogue were to be irreproachable. Then there were the "rulers" of the synagogue and the chief ruler who was responsible for the services. He it was who would ask Jesus to be the "delegate of the congregation" on such an occasion as this. An order of service was followed in the same manner as we have an order of service in our churches. It was as follows: Prayer, Reciting of Creed, Benedictions, Reading of law, Benedictions again, Reading of Prophets. When the Prophets were

read an Interpreter gave the "substance." This was called "targuming" (Neh. 8:8). This *interpreting* was necessary because of the language of the people not being in Hebrew. Translation into the *vulgar* was necessary. We can understand on this principle why certain quotations taken from the Old Testament to the New are not as the Old "word for word." They are usually from the Septuagint, a paraphrase.

The sermon was an important part of the Synagogue service. The preacher—sometimes a noted visiting Rabbi—was supposed to have made a *moral* and a *mental* preparation. Just as in our day we demand that a *preacher* shall *practise* so in the first century they had a saying "You preach beautifully but you do not practise beautifully." He who had read the law might preach if he were capable. He could employ an interpreter, an Amora or speaker, to explain his sermon to the people if necessary. This would be when a Rabbi would whisper to the Amora and he would give it out in Aramæan or Latin as the people required.

There were certain noted popular preachers who were not real "students." What they gave out was compared to "toys, tinsels and trifles" as contrasted with the "jewels" of the Rabbis. Indeed they remind me of the Greek Sophists, who were, first and last, Rhetoricians rather than logicians. Against these Socrates worked when he stood for *standards*. They were time servers and people pleasers. In those days as in ours there were certain popular demands upon a "preacher." He should have (a) a good figure, (b) a pleasant expression, (c) a melodious voice, "words like a bride's to a groom," (d) fluency, "speech sweet as honey," (e) diction richly adorned, even as a bride knows how to adjust her ornaments on the wedding day, (f) not easily disconcerted, (g) conciliatory, (h) not personal, for had not Moses failed to lead Israel over Jordan after he rebuked them, and was not Elijah succeeded by Elisha after Carmel's scene? Now these preachers seemed to care more for manner than matter. In order to arouse a sleepy audience one preacher was reported to have asked why Esther was queen over 127 Persian Provinces. The answer was, Because she was a descendant of Sarah who was 127 years old. Again, what woman bore 600,000 men at a single

birth? Answer, Jochebed, mother of Moses, because Moses was worth 600,000 Israelites. A preacher was supposed to know his Bible well, prepare to preach—"hear himself—before the people heard him." He must be "attractive;" i. e., he must *hold his audience* from walking out while he preached.

Now when we read of all these requirements and yet note that "all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22) we can understand more fully the statement "Never man spake like this man." He applied Isaiah 61:1, 2a to Himself (Luke 4:21). How pretentious His claim must have sounded to His prejudiced neighbors! And although "words of grace . . . proceeded out of his mouth," they asked "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Jesus preceived their questionings. He read their thoughts. He knew that the Nazarenes expected Him to perform some miracle in His "own country." But instead He reminded them how Elijah passed by many famine stricken widows of Israel, yet provided food for the widow of Zarephath; how Elisha did not cleanse the lepers of Israel, yet he did instruct Naaman the Syrian how to be healed of his leprosy. As Israel's prophets had not applied "Physician, heal thyself," even so the prophet in their midst was passing by "His own" for others. This excited their jealousies and incited them to anger. They rose right up in the synagogue and "cast him forth out of the city." Their intention evidently was to kill Him (verse 29), but He eluded them.

Edersheim thinks that His visit to Nazareth "was in many respects decisive." Christ's History is here represented in "epitome." "He came unto his own and his own received him not." But Christ's aim was to please the Father and so He would not look on this as an "ordeal."

§ 37. Removal to Capernaum. Mat. 4: 13-16; Luke 4: 31a.

Christ, cast out of His own town, went to Capernaum, which was to be His future home, or rather the center from which He went out to the surrounding villages and to which He returned. Like Abraham of old, the Master "looked for

a city whose builder and maker is God." So He was not concerned about permanent abodes on earth. He was a "Sojourner" on earth and in this respect, as in so many others, is the example of the saints, "pilgrims and strangers" here whose "citizenship is in heaven." Says Papini, "In no city did He make a long stay. Jesus was a wanderer, such a man as is called a vagabond by the . . . sedentary citizen rooted to his threshold. His life is an eternal journey . . . He was born on a journey. Still a baby at the breast He was carried along the sun-parched road to Egypt; from Egypt He came back to the waters and greenness of Galilee. From Nazareth He often went to Jerusalem to the Passover. The voice of John called Him to the Jordan; an inner voice called Him to the desert; and after the forty days of hunger and temptation, He began His restless vagabond life from city to city, from village to village, from mountain to mountain across Palestine . . .

"He is the traveler without rest, the wanderer with no home, the wayfarer for love's sake, the voluntary exile in His own country. . . . His bed is the furrow in a field, the bench of a boat, the shadow of an olive tree. Sometimes He sleeps in the houses of those who love Him, but only for short periods . . . His journeys often began and ended at Capernaum. Matthew called it 'his city.' At Capernaum He had access to the synagogue built by the good centurion (Luke 7:5). There was Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue (Mark 5:22). Then His earliest disciples had their homes near there."

So Christ "passed the summer" in a "ministry of quiet 'power' chiefly alone and unattended by His disciples." There has been a tradition in the synagogue that the prediction of Isaiah 9:2 "referred to the new light, with which God would enlighten the eyes of those who had penetrated into the mysteries of Rabbinic Lore, enabling them to perceive concerning 'loosing and binding' concerning what was clean and what was unclean." Others said it referred to a promise to returned exiles. But Matthew applied it to Christ's Galilean ministry. He saw in Him who is the "True light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world" the Illuminator of all Galilee in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali.

§ 38. The Call of the Four. Mat. 14: 18-22; Mark 1: 16-20; Luke 5: 1-11.

In John 1 : 35-51, Sections 23 and 24, we have the record of the call to "discipleship," but here we have the call "to fellowship and Apostolate." Luke records some details, whereas Matthew and Mark give a condensed account. They supplement each other. The scene is along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee or Lake of Gennesaret. It is early in the morning, yet a "multitude" is pressing upon Jesus to hear Him speak the "word of God" as He stands by the sea. Capernaum, on the caravan route, had become a commercial center. "Artisans, bargainers, brokers and shopkeepers had come there to stay." A motley crowd surrounded the Great Teacher, so He got permission to enter Simon's boat, from which He taught. (Luke 5 : 3). Then, when He was done with His teaching, He bade Peter "Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." "And Simon answered and said Master, we toiled all night and took nothing." Likely the night had been a stormy one. And what Simon implies is that since we caught nothing during the night it would be futile to cast net during the day. He had concluded that they were not in "luck" that time. But when Jesus bade him because of his faith in the Master he said "but at *thy* word I *will* let down the nets." Simon took a step of faith based on Jesus' word. He "experimented and gained an experience" (Tyson in "Church on the Dune") as some present day writers would put it. He *obeyed* because he *believed*. Their "catch" was so embarrassingly large that they were compelled to call for help to relieve breaking nets (Luke 5 : 6) and then their "boats . . . began to sink" (Luke 5 : 7). Then Peter "fell down at Jesus' feet (knees), saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But Jesus had no intentions of departing from Peter. He assured Him that from that time on he would "catch men." Peter was amazed at Christ's power and success. He knew he had no such power or skill and so felt ill at ease in the presence of this Expert Fisher, but Jesus was simply teaching him that as he had caught fish by simply obeying Christ so later he would catch

men by the same obedience. Pentecost fulfilled the prediction.

So Peter, Andrew, James and John were called to *permanent* discipleship and preparation for their future work. The "Follow me" of Christ would be understood for "it was not only the practice, but regarded as one of the most sacred duties, for a Master to gather around him a circle of disciples." This call of the early disciples was marked or characterized by its being (1) a call to fellowship. Christ had broken with and been persecuted by the Jewish authorities. Whatever fellowship He enjoyed was with His disciples. (2) It was a call from former occupations and earthly ties. (3) It was a call to Discipleship not simply to "learn more of doctrine" but to pursue a type of work quite unlike their former occupation, yet one for which that was emblematic. They were to "catch men." Practice was to accompany precept. They were to live out the lessons as they learned them. Their Teacher emphasized the "Function" rather than the "Content" theory of knowledge.

"So "Four poor fishermen, four plain men of the lake, men who did not know how to read, nor indeed how to speak correctly, four humble men whom no one else would have been able to distinguish from others, were called by Jesus to found with Him a kingdom which was to occupy all the earth."—*Papini.*

One author suggests that the fisherman *knows how to wait,* that he is patient and after letting down his nets all the rest is left with God. He has "good days" and "bad days." "He washes his hands in water and his spirit in solitude." So Jesus took these men and made leaders out of them. Given a great man and others grow up around him. David had his warriors; Arthur gathered together his knights, "Charlemagne his paladins, Napoleon his marshalls" and Jesus His Apostles.

And Jesus Christ, the God-Man, is still saying "Follow me." A small group from among the "multitude" *leave all* and *follow Him.* Those sit at His feet. They are "with Christ in the school of Prayer." They fulfill the injunction "Abide with me." Having learned of Him He bids them

"Go ye" and they go forth as heralds of the Truth: they become Crusaders of the Cross, for each age needs declarations of the Gospel message. The Apostles had as their worthy successors the Apologists and the Apostolic Fathers. And since their day there has been a catena (chain) of witnesses, souls as truly devoted to Christ as the sons of Jonas and Zebedee, "gifts of God." So the fire of truth has been descried in the distance as one saint and then another would kindle it on the mountain-top of his own age and country. Thus we stand on our peak of revealed truth and Gospel blessing and gaze afar.

We see the lights of Simpson, Edwards, Finney, Wesley, Whitefield, Knox, Luther, Huss and Wycliffe, and other lights shining but dimly because of distance. But each one is on its mountain top of blessing and was lit by hands of faith with the spark of truth or with coals carried from the mountain just beyond.

§ 39. A Day of Miracles in Capernaum. Mat. 8: 14-17; Mark 1: 21-34; Luke 4: 31-41.

On this Sabbath day Capernaum was amazed. All who attended the synagogue were astonished at the most extraordinary Rabbi. Jesus was teaching that day. Probably as before at Nazareth He commented on the appointed selection from the Prophets. And how different was the lesson in His hands than in the hands of the scribes. His was a note of *authority*. Something in His general character enabled Him to put a meaning into the words that often seemed dry and obscure. Not that all who listened and were enrapt began to make the glorious ideal a reality in their lives. But there was a recognition of the true, the grand, the high. "There is that in man, evidence of his origin and destiny, which always and involuntarily responds to the presentation of the higher."

There was in that representative synagogue audience that day one who recognized the Teacher. The fact that the demonized man was present and apparently calm up to this point argues that the "unclean spirit" did not possess him *constantly*. Here we see a case of a man at worship. All about are wondering at the authoritative utterances of

the Great Teacher, but this one suddenly cries out "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art the Holy One of God." Imagine the excitement of that company. Here is one who recognizes in Jesus of Nazareth "the Holy one of God." But he looked not upon Jesus as a Saviour, but a destroyer. So ever it is with demons. Christ they recognize, yet not as we, for we know of Him as the One "Who will save his people from their sins." We note here that . . . demons *know* Christ. His presence or His name provokes their displeasure. Yet they are not wise enough to conceal their knowledge of and regard for Him, nor yet their enmity. But Jesus would not be heralded by such a one, so He rebuked the unclean spirit and bade it leave the person. Whereupon it threw him into a paroxysm and using that voice for the last time, uttered a cry and "came out of him." Then those that had been astonished at His words of authority were now amazed at His work of power. The question was "What is this, a new teaching?" His power was beyond their understanding. "Even unclean spirits . . . obey Him." So when the meeting was concluded the "report" of this unusual synagogue happening and its Actor spread over Galilee like wild fire.

It is evident that "the consciousness was not that of the demonized but of the demonizer, just as in certain mesmeric states the consciousness of the mesmerized is really that of the mesmerizer," and that the influence was sudden because of coming into contact with Christ's person.

The Jews attempted to remove demons. Edersheim lists the means as follows (1) Magical means for prevention (avoidance of certain places, times, numbers, or circumstances; amulets, etc.). (2) Direct exorcism, (by certain outward means or incantations). But Jesus spake the word of power and the demons obeyed. This power He transferred to His disciples.

Since "Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil" as these works are evident in humanity, and as Christ took a human form (Incarnation) to do this, it is clear that Satan and his cohorts are eager, by indwelling men and women, to destroy them and thus frustrate Christ's effort to

heal and save. But men can and do resist Satan's intrusions. So even the "possessed" man is *morally* responsible because there apparently are periods when he could "resist the devil." Wonderful it is that these demons in the presence of Jesus "own defeat before the conflict."

When the Master with His disciples had left the synagogue they went to Peter's home. But they were not received to the accustomed feast for Peter's wife's mother had suddenly taken a "burning fever." Such a fever is common in that district today and for it the Talmud prescribes a magical remedy. It is as follows: "Tie a knife wholly of iron by a braid of hair to a thorn bush and repeat on successive days Ex. 3 : 2-3, then verse 4, and finally verse 5, after which the bush is cut down as a whole and a certain magical formula is pronounced."

But how different was the healing of Jesus! "They tell him of her" and "besought him for her." The Master Physician came to the woman and stooping over her (Luke 4 : 29) He took her by the hand (Mat. 8 : 15; Mark 1 : 31) and "rebuked the fever" (Luke 4 : 39) and it left her. Then she arose and ministered unto him. Here is "the first Diaconate." She who had been healed was the Deaconess. What a meal that must have been, planned by a brain just relieved from the pressure of a raging fever, and prepared by a hand cooled by the Master's touch. How glad is the service of those that live because He lives.

As the Sabbath drew to a close and the sun set, the star of hope appeared in Capernaum, for the villagers realized that in their midst was the One who had power over all disease. They learn that He is in Peter's home, so to that house they go with *all their sick.* "From all parts they bring them: mothers, wives, widows, fathers, children, husbands —their loved ones, the treasures they had almost lost. . . ." They wait expectantly at Peter's home. Jesus comes forth and each diseased one feels the tender yet telling touch of those hands that were one day to be pierced with unrelenting nails. All are healed. Demons are cast out and bidden not to speak because "they knew that he was the Christ." Matthew tells us that this fulfilled the prophecy "Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases." Now there are

those that take great pains to prove that this passage does not teach that the atonement of Christ includes provision for bodily healing. Some say that He "bare our diseases" (i. e., the diseases of those about Him on earth) *sympathetically*. Others say the Greek word used by Matthew and translated "bare" (bastazo) means that as a "burden laid upon him" He *bare* our diseases. But I should ask pardon for stating what seems a very weak negative case. The fact is that both Lidell and Scott and also Thayer give "take away" for *bastazo,* as well as to bear up as one does a burden. This is clear when we realize how a *burden is borne along and away.* Thayer says on "bare diseases" *to take away or remove by curing them.* Edersheim writes "I can scarcely find words strong enough to express my dissent from those who could limit Isa. 53 : 4, either on the one hand to spiritual or on the other hand to physical 'sickness.' The promise is one of future deliverance from both, of a Restorer from all the woe which sin had brought. In the same way the expression 'taking upon himself' and 'bearing' refers to the Christ as our Deliverer because our Substitute. Because He took upon Himself our infirmities, therefore He bore our sicknesses." That the view here given is that of the New Testament appears from a comparison of the application of the passage in St. Mat. 8 : 17 with that in St. John 1 : 29 and 1 Pet. 2 : 24. The words as given by St. Matthew are most truly a New Testament "Targum" (translation) of the Hebrew original. The LXX has it "This man carries our sins and is pained for us." We note here that Edersheim thinks of Mat. 8 : 17; John 1 : 29; and 1 Peter 2 : 24 as parallel passages. In Matthew we have one word for the *take away,* in John another and in Peter yet another, but all can be translated "take away," an expression which has shades of meaning displayed by various Greek verbs. Such a word is "bare," past tense of *bear.* Matthew shows that Christ was relieving the sick ones of their *burdensome* diseases. John cites John the Baptist referring to Christ as a Lamb, used as a substitutionary offering instead of the sinner or sinful world. Peter shows the Suffering Saviour "carrying up to the tree" (Margin R.V.) our sins. Peter also adds "By whose bruise ye were *healed.*"

In discussing Christ "groaning in spirit" at the grave of Lazarus, Edersheim (vol. 2, p. 323) says "The unfathomed depth of the Theanthropic fellow-suffering which was both vicarious and redemptive."

Were not Christ's beneficent works done in anticipation of the Cross? Could He have forgiven freely without Calvary in view? Sickness is a result of sin. If He atoned for sin, surely He atoned for the effects of sin, the cause of sickness. So the question of healing being in the atonement does not rest upon the meaning of *bastazo,* although *bastazo* in no way embarrasses a believer in the theory of healing being in the atonement provided he reads his own Greek and not the strained translation of an objector.

§ 40. First Preaching Tour in Galilee. (Mat. 4: 23) Luke 4: 42-44. Mat. 8: (1) 2-4. Mark 1: 35-45. Luke 5: 12-16.

The morning after the "Day of miracles in Capernaum" the Master rose early (likely between 3 and 6 a.m.) and sought solitude for prayer. Since He who was divine as well as human felt the need of prayer in the midst of busy days should not we, conscious of human frailty through and through, find that buoyancy and victory that is realized through prayer? But Jesus had chosen disciples and they followed Him. We would hardly venture that they annoyed Him, yet they did not enjoy His viewpoint and often misunderstood Him. What concerned the disciples was that Jesus was in demand. They believed that He should embrace the opportunity that the Capernaum crowds offered Him, and tried to impress the Master with this fact as "all are seeking thee" (Mark 1: 37) indicates. But Jesus did not share their enthusiasm for a "permanent" Capernaum ministry. He was eager to go *"elsewhere into the next towns."* He had "come forth" to go from town to town (verse 28).

Evidently the multitudes followed Jesus because He had performed miracles. Why did He not go back among them and receive their plaudits? How extraordinary for a popular hero, a public benefactor, to withdraw as He was doing!

But Christ never seemed to "take to" performing miracles.

He did "wonders" yet He kept saying "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe;" "an evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign;" "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Mark 7 : 34 records that Christ "sighed" (stenadzo) when he unstopped deaf ears. Luke 10 : 17-20 tells us that Christ desired His Apostles to "look for higher and better things than power over all diseases or even over evil spirits." Having one's name written down in "the Book" is a better ground for rejoicing than being able to perform the miracles which surely evince supernatural power. On this point we today need to scrutinize ourselves. Are we going in for the spectacular? Do we rejoice more over healings than over salvation of souls? Do we give greater honor to a brother successful in praying the prayer of faith for the sick than we do to one who leads souls to Christ or edifies them? Is it not true today that "All are seeking" the miracle man, the wonder worker? Is it not in many cases a curiosity that jams our places of meeting instead of a reverence for God and His Christ? But Jesus withdrew from the showy. He could not be spoilt by praise. Some of His servants have His spirit in this respect. The writer only a few months ago talked privately with a servant of God greatly used who is really humble. The basis of his extraordinary humility is the fact that he really gives God credit for what is being done through his ministry. But how pathetic are the cases of men who are blessed with gifts yet who lack the grace of humility. They are unapproachable; they court flattery; they are to be prayed for and pitied for "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

But Jesus *did* perform miracles and many of them. Edersheim gives two reasons for His so doing. First there was an *"inward necessity* that the God-man when brought into contact with disease and misery . . . would remove it by His presence, by His touch, by His word." There was also "*an outward necessity* because no other mode of teaching equally convincing would have reached those accustomed to Rabbinic disputations, and who must have looked for such a manifestation from one who claimed such authority." He could not refuse to help the helpless when He had the

resources to do so, any more than a man could neglect a suffering child. Common "milk of human kindness" would prompt him to relieve suffering, yet He never put out His "shingle" as a doer of miracles nor did He advise them to "bring the sick." He was longing for a spiritual response. He found people too prone to build on the material. He deplored it, yet He did what He could for them. Then certainly He knew that the religious leaders would be challenged by His *works* since they had no heart nor head for His *words*. He was beyond them. This they would not grant so He was compelled to choose publicans and fishermen that He might have some disciples. But His "signs," "wonders" and "powers" arrested the scribes and Pharisees as well as the common people. He *gave them pause*. They had to reckon with Him so they said He did what He did by Beelzebub. "Dyed-in-the-wool," dogmatic theology has always cried "False Prophet," "Anti-Christ" and "Servant of Satan" at those that differed with it. It is easy to anathematize one that you cannot classify, but let us beware lest our anathemas become boomerangs.

So Christ "went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee *preaching* and casting out devils." (Mark 1:39.) Christ subordinated everything else to going about utilizing the Jewish synagogue as an avenue for getting His teaching to the hearts of the people.

Here we meet the incident of the willingness of Christ to heal the leper, whom He did cleanse of his leprosy. (See Mat. 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16). The leper came believing; Christ even touched him and healed him; and charged him to be quiet about it; to go to Jerusalem to show himself to the priest and make the required offering. But this man disobeyed Jesus and "spread abroad the matter" and hindered Christ's real synagogue ministry by his unbridled and thoughtless enthusiasm. Herein we have much material to understand Christ's attitude toward His own power, the sick, the institutions of His day and even the Jewish religion, as well as the method of work which He preferred to use.

He used this power to heal this leper because He was "moved with compassion" (Mark 1:41). He *willed* to help

and heal because He felt. Then, as now, He was *touched with the feeling of infirmity*. He even broke through "regulations" and "touched him." That leper should not have come within six feet of Christ and if the wind had been blowing otherwise than leeward one hundred feet. But Jesus did not reproach him for violations of law but actually dared to touch him. He came in contact with the leper. Oh! how that outcast from society, that man who was a living corpse, whose cry of "Unclean, unclean" was his own funeral dirge, whose robe was his shroud, how he enjoyed that touch. How Christ's "I will" was music to those ears that heard no prayers even except those of hopelessness and despair. For there was no power either in magic or medicine or in Jewish religion to heal a leper. Their attitude is described as "heartlessness." Yet contrast Christ's reception of this leper. Such a contrast was to be expected. Rabbis were men; Christ was the God-man. Elisha came not near Naaman, the Syrian, but Elisha was just a man, though a prophet; Christ touched a leper, as God might do without defilement. To show that the Jews were dull in interpreting even their own conceptions of the predicted Messiah when the interpretations are applied to Christ we note that He was called " 'the Leprous,' the King Messiah being represented as seated in the entrance to Rome, surrounded by, and relieving, all misery and disease, in fulfillment of Isaiah 53 : 4."

The leper had confidence in Christ. Christ had healing for the leper. So it is, He casts away none that come.

But Jesus seemed so eager to conceal His labor of love, His work of power, that He besought the man to go to the priest in silence, expressly "for a testimony unto them." The priest needed the witness. If Christ healed leprosy He was more than an ordinary Rabbi. And, again, Jesus did not want the publicity, which, when it came, drove Him to the "desert places" (Mark 1 : 45)). When embarrassed by popularity and curiosity Jesus had to withdraw to pray. Yet they sought Him.

But He was also sought and haunted and hounded by "familiars" of the Jewish authorities who were "making a

case" against Him. Yet He manifested Himself to them by deeds of power and even recognized their organization as is shown by His sending the healed leper to the priest.

§ 41. The Paralytic Borne of Four. Mat. 9: (1) 2-8. Mark 2: 1-12. Luke 5: 17-26.

Jesus had been preaching in Galilee. "The gospel of the kingdom" was His theme. He had healed "all manner of sickness among the people." The case of the leper is probably given as a typical case, or as a sample of just how He did His work.

Then Jesus returned to Capernaum for a little. Soon the news spread that He was "at home." Whereupon a great crowd filled the house "so that there was no longer room, no, not even about the door." Jesus availed Himself of the opportunity and "spake the word unto them." As the sequel clearly indicates in the house of Peter were "scribes." Probably, as Geikie believes, these occupied seats near Jesus. These were there not with friendly motive. So averse were they to Jesus that Edersheim likens their attitude to the Master to that of the priests of Baal on Mt. Carmel toward Elijah.

Jesus was a "new voice" among Rabbis. He was a problem to the scribes. From their training and view point they could not but look upon Him with suspicion so we can well imagine how they scrutinized Him on this occasion.

The Rabbis led the Jewish nation, since they were the religious heads and with the best Jews their religion was their life. At least it controlled their life. "They were the theologians, the jurists, the legislatures, the politicians, and indeed, the soul of Israel. The priest had sunk to a subordinate place in the public regard."—*Geike.* The Rabbis were reverenced because they represented the law. They were honored in the street, the synagogue and the home, much as ministers are today among some people. For example, in a Norwegian home the minister, when present as a guest, really presides at the table as a host. This gives him authority and enables him to impress religion upon the home life. "Wise in their generation, they fostered this homage by external aids. Their long robes, their broad phylacteries, or prayer fillets,

on their forehead and arm, their conspicious Tephilin, with the sacred tassels dangling from each corner, were part of themselves, without which they were never seen." They were venerated, and so easily controlled Jerusalem.

When the audience had assembled in Peter's house four men came bearing a palsied man on a hammock. To their dismay access to Jesus was impossible, so great was the crowd. But though they halted momentarily the "four" were not discouraged nor deterred from reaching Christ. Those oriental houses had a stairway leading to the roof from the outside of the house. So it would be possible to go up to the roof and then draw the palsied one's hammock to the roof by means of ropes. Evidently this was done and then a hole was made through the roof and thus access was gained to the very feet of the Master. We here remark that roofs of oriental houses were not made like our roofs. Edersheim believes that Christ stood under the covered gallery of Peter's house, which was built after the pattern of houses of the middle class. He says, "In such case it would have been comparatively easy to 'unroof' the covering of 'tiles,' and then, 'having dug out' an opening through the lighter framework which supported the 'tiles' to let down their burden 'into the midst before Jesus.' "

Although they were accustomed to have the sick crowding about the Master yet here was something new. And surely all present were attentive to the descending hammock conveying a poor palsied man so eager for healing that he risked such a round about and unusual way of approach to Christ.

The sick man in the presence of Him who was the Hope of health was not without trepidation. Jesus must have noted the invalid's fear. Probably his experience in getting to Christ had used up his strength and left him weak and worn, if not worried. But Jesus saw his heart and addressed him with "Child, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee."

But it was not only fear that Jesus was dissipating, but He was also dispelling a conviction of sins by forgiving those sins. Why did Jesus speak of forgiving sins? Did the man realize that his sins had brought on his sickness

and that his sins and his sickness were connected? We believe that Christ "read at a glance" the real need and longing of his heart. Jesus granted him forgiveness first.

But scribes present began to whisper their criticisms. They recognized the "blasphemy." No Rabbi would dare to forgive sins. "Who can forgive sins but one, even God?" From the point of view of the Rabbis the "scribes sitting there" were right. God alone could forgive sins. So when He forgave the palsied man of his sins He did it not as a man but as the "Son of man," the God-man. When challenged by the "reasoning" of the scribes He affirmed that it was just as *easy* to forgive sins as to heal. (Mark 2:9). And to make good His right to forgive He healed the paralytic (Mark 2:10-12). The healing was so evident that "They were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, 'We never saw it on this fashion.'"

We can easily imagine the discomfiture of the scribes who were put to shame by this signal manifestation of power. Power this Nazarene evidently had over disease; and power He professed to have to forgive sin. And the people had been amazed by Him. The scribes saw their power slipping away from them. In the words of the Chinese, they were "losing face."

Since only God could forgive sins, and to the Jewish teachers Jesus was not God, therefore Jesus could not forgive sins. Hence He blasphemed even though He possessed power. Rabbis revered the past. "They had all the conservatism of lawyers" *(Geikie)*. Jesus could point to no precedent that would warrant His professing to forgive sins. So He was an "Innovator," and so dangerous. Therefore He excited the scribes because He seemed to *"intrude on divine rights."* Had they only granted His deity all would have been easy. But this they did not do and Jesus surely read in their antagonism that which would nail Him to the cross. Calvary loomed up in the distance. As yet Jesus "carried the people with him," but He had arrayed against Him the "power behind the throne," the Pharisees. "The die had been cast." Unbending, petrified religion was destined to send Him to that most horrible of all deaths, crucifixion.

§ 42. The Call of Matthew. Matthew 9: 9-13. Mark 2: 13-17. Luke 5: 27-32.

I

Called to Discipleship

Matthew belonged to that despised class in the Roman Empire, the taxgatherers. A publican was held in contempt. The Jews of Palestine had religious scruples about paying tax to a king who did not represent Jehovah. So the taxgatherer received the hatred that was felt toward the whole tax business.

When we study the subject of Roman taxation we do not wonder that the Jews resented the publican. Imports, exports, goods bought and sold, bridge-money, road-money, town-dues, etc., meant quite an outlay of money. But this was not all. So many different objects were taxed that even modern scholars with all their research have not been able to identify all the names. The tax percentage ranged from 2½-12½% of the article. Modern objectors to income tax would have felt keenly Rome's extortion. Collectors would stop one on his journey, unload his pack animals, scatter his goods about and even open private letters. The taxgatherer was supreme. The were *oppressors*. Partiality was common among them. They refunded to favorites but exacted from others. At times the good ass of a defenceless person was taken and a poor one given in its place.

A mokhes, or collector, was "great" if he had others really do the work, but "small" if he did it himself. Since Matthew was "sitting at the receipt of custom" in person, he was very greatly despised.

There is a case of a taxgatherer becoming a noted Rabbi and the fact that he had been a collector of toll depriving him from intercourse with his very rigid colleagues. We see how the Jews were prejudiced against the publicans. Yet Jesus called one to discipleship. It is clear that Jesus had standards not those of experts on religion among the Jews. It is even so today. Wherever you go you meet people who by their office or family or place of residence are supposed to

be doomed to obscurity if not damnation. They really are bound as are the Hindoos by their caste. Yet Jesus still calls.

II

Response to the Call

How meaningful are those words "And he arose and followed him." Matthew had often sat before his custom house near the sea and watched the crowds about Jesus. He had heard His gracious words and wondered at His miraculous works. Probably he had heard Him speak at the synagogue. Matthew was won. He saw in this Rabbi something different than in the other Rabbis. Jesus' presence and speech gave him hope. Though the Rabbis had ruled that repentance was specially difficult for taxgatherers and herdsmen, yet Matthew was attracted to Jesus and encouraged to hope on by his very bearing. With what eagerness must Matthew have responded to Christ's welcome. His "follow me" was music to his ears. So Matthew lost no time. "He arose and followed him."

What an encouragement that must have been to many a poor outcast of Israel. Even *publicans* had a place with Jesus of Nazareth.

Does not the history of the Church teem with those of the Matthew type—men and women outside the pale of the possibility of salvation and service? We will venture to name St. Augustine, John Bunyan, Jerry McAuley and Samuel Hadley. We think of a miner, a cobbler, a base ball player and a pugilist—all saved to serve because Jesus cast His longing, loving eye, filled with hope, in their direction and said, "Follow me," and they "followed him."

III

The Feast in Matthew's House

After Matthew's call the Master was a welcome guest in his home, as were the other disciples of Jesus. There is a beautiful community of interest among the true followers of Christ. Christianity teaches and practices a "levelling"

socially. While they "sat at meat," publicans and sinners, likely former associates of Matthew, gathered round the table. Then the Pharisees, who haunted Him, asked His disciples why their Master ate with publicans and sinners. Their object in thus criticizing Jesus to His disciples was evidently to inject evil into their minds and so prejudice them against Him.

But Jesus heard their cavilling and came to the assistance of His disciples. He certainly "answered" the Pharisees. "They that are whole have no need of a physician; but they that are sick," was His silencing utterance. In this statement Jesus contended against the exclusiveness of the Pharisees and justifies His mingling with the publican class. Why give attention to the well and avoid the sick if you would do the work of a physician? A physician must go right into the midst of germs to work his cures. Christ, the Great Physician, mingled with publicans to save them. Souls meant more to Him than time-worn traditions. He leaped over barriers of Pharisaical prejudice to redeem precious souls. Jesus invited the Pharisees to "learn" the meaning of their own Scriptures. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous but sinners." All the mercy they knew or exercised was *sacrifice*. Merit was everything. They knew not how to forgive without first knowing that *penitence was done*. The Rabbis had to be sure of one's penitence before welcoming him to God. So they made much of works. He had mercy and not sacrifice. Rabbis insisted that people turn to the law and keep it before any forgiveness was assured.

Christ forgave freely when He saw a heart longing for fellowship with Him. Christ forgave unconditionally; but the Rabbis never. They weighed down those under them with burdens which they themselves could not bear. "If a person had sinned in one direction, he must not only avoid it for the future, but aim at doing all the more in the opposite direction, or of overcoming sin in the same circumstances of temptation."

Now, Jesus freely invites *all* sinners to come into the room of grace by a step of faith. He welcomes them. "Rabbinism is only despair and a kind of Pessimism."

Christ never put anybody on "probation." His word is, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." So though Matthew and his kind were regarded as impossibilities religiously yet Jesus had time and hope for them.

So today He sups with us and teaches us and stands off our accusers by His deeds, His words and His intercession.

§ 43. The Question About Fasting. Mat. 9: 14-17; Mark 2: 18-22; Luke 5: 33-39.

John's disciples and the Pharisees sought from Jesus an explanation. "Why" did Jesus' disciples fail to fast while they were careful to fast? To their question Jesus made answer by two illustrations. His disciples were to Himself as the "sons of the bride-chamber" to the "bridegroom." The "sons of the bride-chamber" or as we would say "groomsmen," "*rejoiced greatly* because of the bridegroom's voice" (John 3: 29). They were happy to know that the bridegroom was with the bride and they listened to him talking to her and perhaps laughing with her. As they stood near the door of the bridal-chamber, they were glad to know that they had done their part well and that the groom, for whom they had served, was at last happy with his bride. His joy was an occasion for their gladness.

Even so Jesus' disciples rejoiced with Him in His success; for at that time He seems to be succeeding. People were thronging Him. Scribes were powerless before Him. Their Teacher was increasing. John had decreased even as he foresaw (John 3: 30). That "voice" was no longer "crying in the wilderness." John had prepared the way of the Lord and Herod had thrown John the Baptist into prison. Little wonder his disciples felt like fasting. But *as yet* Jesus, "The Bridegroom," was with His disciples. They should enjoy Him and learn of Him while they had Him. Does Jesus not state clearly that one day He too would be separated from His disciples? "Then will they fast." He foresees His beloved disciples disconcerted by His death (cf. Luke 24).

As the illustration of the "sons of the bride-chamber" and the "bridegroom" was probably intended for John's disciples, so that of the incongruity of putting new patches

on old garments or new wine into old skins was likely intended for the Pharisees.

New patches would stretch and tear the old thread-bare garment and "the rent" would be "worse." New wine would cause the old time-worn skins to burst. So the patch should *suit* the garment and the wine skins should be strong enough to hold the wine. Just so the *form* of Christ's teaching should be suitable to the *substance*. Why should His disciples imitate the Pharisees in their fasting? Jesus' teaching was not part and parcel of that of the Pharisees. Christ was no reformer, much less an imitator. It was not fitting that His disciples should ape the Pharisees. Pharisaical customs no more fitted Jesus' disciple than Saul's armor fitted David. The "new wine" of Christ's teaching must have "fresh skins" of outward conduct. Jesus taught a *consistency* between belief and life. New should go with new and old with old. The outward should express the inward; the attire, the attitude; the vessel should suit the contents.

§ 44. The Infirm Man At the Pool of Bethesda. John 5.

Students of the etymology of *Bethesda* are in doubt as to the proper meaning of the word. The most likely however are "House of Healing" and "House of Bubbling-up." The name evidently came from the fact that there was located a pool whose waters were supposed to have curative properties after an angel had "troubled" them. Whoever, after the waters were troubled first stepped into the pool was healed according to "popular idea." We can well imagine that many impotent folk would be on the five porches about the pool waiting for the troubling of the waters. There seems to be no doubt but that these waters bubbled from physical rather than supernatural causes. Intermittent springs are not uncommon. A spring known as the "Fountain of the Virgin" in Jerusalem still bubbles at certain times but not continually.

What we face is a set of facts very interesting and suggestive. To this wonderful pool many sick had come. Eagerly they waited for the moving of the waters. All

believed in its healing powers. Jesus comes on to the porches, possibly to avoid the crowds, possibly attracted by human suffering. He noticed "a certain man there, which had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity." Two things about this man impressed Jesus: first, the fact that he was "lying there"; i. e., his impotent condition; second, the fact that for so long a time he had thus been indisposed (verse 6). So Jesus directed a question at him, an apparently useless question, "Wouldst thou be made whole?" Why was he there unless to be made whole? But the man's answer indicates that he was on the verge of discouragement, if not despair. He could not help himself quickly enough. A younger, less infirm person, always beat him to the pool. He hoped against hope. He saw no chance of being made whole. Jesus searched him out to see if he recognized his extremity. This man was so taken up with the hopelessness of his case that he did not even affirm that he desired to be healed. What was the use? Could he expect this unknown man to stay near enough to put him into the waters? To such a man Jesus said, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." And Jesus' word of command was accompanied by His work of healing, for "straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked."

In this scene at the Pool of Bethesda we see reflected many an analogous picture protraying conditions in life. As impotent humanity is lying hopeful but almost helpless on the edge of *pools of their own choosing*—pools of superstition, pools of legalism, pools of emotionalism—Jesus, ever present where the need is the greatest, goes up and down in their midst. There you find Him rather than in the midst of the strong, well, the self-sufficient for "They that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick." And the Great Physician attends particularly to those whose cases are hopeless—hopeless because they cannot apply even the poor remedy that they know. Yet they linger at the pool sharing their miseries with others of like condition. To such the Master's authoritative and energizing, "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk," is a signal to start life again. It is the satisfaction of lingering desire; it is the "substance of things hoped for"; it is life instead of death.

What Christ did for the infirm man was good, very good. He always did the good, never the evil. Yet the Jews, being unable to gainsay *what* He did, took offence at *when* He did it. So a new scene arises growing out of the fact expressed in the words, "Now it was the sabbath on that day" (verse 9).

Lo, a man may be languishing on a mat of pain and the religious Jews care nothing for it. But let that man take up that old mat and carry it away to scenes not flooded with memories of ills and disappointments and those same Jews are incensed, because say they, "It is the sabbath and it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed." This carrying of the bed was an infringement of the Sabbatic law, as interperted by traditionalism. The Jews saw the external infringement of the law, but did not see the blessing of health which the healed man enjoyed. So they asked who it was that had commanded him to take up his bed and walk rather than who had made him whole. They were more interested in the punishment of a law-breaker than in the honoring of a benefactor. How sectarian were they! How narrow! How selfish! Yet legalism is ever so. Those who conform not are forbidden.

Now the scribe has spun out endless exactions relative to Sabbath-keeping. The tying of knots of camel drivers and sailors was unlawful. It was equally illegal to untie them, yet "A knot which could be untied with one hand might be undone." The quantity of food that might be carried on Sabbath "must be less in bulk than a dried fig; if of honey, only as much as would anoint a wound; if water, as much as would make eye-salve; if paper, as much as would be put in a phylactery; if ink, as much as would form two letters."—*Geikie.*

But the priests and scribes were not always careful to observe their own regulations relative to Sabbath-keeping. Yet they paraded their "hollow puritanism" when Jesus bade the healed man carry his sleeping-mat.

Strange as it may seem at first, yet true it was that the healed man did not know who had restored him to health. It was just one of those situations in life when things happen so unusually that some of the actors play their

parts poorly. One would have thought that gratitude would have prompted him to get the name of Jesus and later reward his benefactor, but lo, he does not even know the name of this wonder-working One (v. 13). And the reason given for this, as stated here, was not so much the fault of him that was healed as the disposition of Jesus to avoid notoriety: "for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in the place."

Later, Jesus met him and bade him "sin no more, least a worse thing come upon" him. This gave the healed man information desired and he soon told the Jews who had healed him possibly to magnify his benefactor in their eyes, or more likely to rid himself of the responsibility of carrying his bed on a Sabbath day.

Then the Jews did "persecute" Jesus. But Jesus contended "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." In this statement Jesus put a new interpretation upon Sabbath-keeping. *"God's rest was truly that of beneficence, not of inactivity,"* says Edersheim. But the Jews took up His statement of verse 17 as a sufficient reason that He should be killed. Said they, "He not only brake the sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God." Jesus did not deny that He regarded Himself as equal with God. He admitted it tacitly and even went on to show how He and the Father were alike. What a rebuke this is to those of Arian tendencies who will not agree that Jesus is "coequal, coeternal, and coessential" with the Father. Note then the assertions of Jesus as to the *points of equality* between Himself and His Father.

a. Equal in power, vs. 20, 21, 28, 29.
b. Equal in Honor—established by judgment power, vs. 22, 23, 27, 30.
c. Equal in life-giving and is self-consistent, vs. 24, 25, 26.

Then Jesus goes about to *substantiate His claims as to His equality with God* by calling on witnesses whose testimony the Jews would have been expected to receive; viz., (a) His works and words as from God (vs. 30-32, 36, 37);

(b) John the Baptist (vs. 33-35); (c) Scriptures (v. 39), Moses (vs. 46, 47).

In verses 30-47 Jesus is very explicit. Nothing is concealed. He simply smothers the Jews with truth. He points to the divine character of His words and works as *evidence of His deity.* He reminds the Jews how John the Baptist had testified of Him and in John's light they "were willing to rejoice for a season." John's ministry they recognized for a time. Then why not heed what John said of Christ? He told them that they did "Search the scriptures, because" said He, "ye think that in them ye have eternal life." They were diligent in studying the Bible because they imagined that therein they would find life everlasting. Yet these very Scriptures "are they which bear witness of me," said He, "and ye will not come to me that ye may have life." They read a Book describing Christ, yet did not recognize the One described. How poorly they read! They took the Bible as the "Fountain of Life" rather than as a road leading to the "Fountain." They *thought* that in the Scriptures they would find life. Their preconceived ideas made them literalists, traditionalists, worshippers of a Book rather than of the living, loving Christ about whom the Book was written. Herein is suggested a subtle Bibliolatry. Beloved, we must get Christ out of the Book or through the Book to the living Christ. Would you know the Christ of the Gospels if He were to appear in our midst? What solemn, awful, pathetic words are these, "Ye search the scriptures . . . and ye will not come to me that ye may have life." "The letter killeth; the Spirit giveth life." The Bible is not a puzzle. Turn it over and see the man on the other side; as the children were enabled to put a map of the U. S. A. together by piecing the bust of our First President, found on the other side of the parts of the puzzle, so the Bible will mean something to us when we have seen the man back of it—the God-man.

Jesus boldly asserted to these Jews that He received no glory from men, and that they had "not the love of God in" themselves. He had clearly broken with the Jews. They hated Him.

§ 45. The Disciples Plucking Grain. Mat. 12: 1-8; Mark 2: 23-28; Luke 6: 1-5.

Jesus and His disciples were travelling through the grain fields on a sabbath day. His disciples were hungry. Says Geikie, "It was no wonder that both he and the disciples were hungry, for no Jew could break his fast till after the morning service at the synagogue, or take supper till after the evening service."

But when, under the eye of Jesus, the disciples "plucked" the grain, the Master was sanctioning *a twofold offense;* for the above-named process involved both "reaping" and "threshing," according to the exacting Pharisees who were shadowing Jesus at every turn. And in no particular did He give more occasion for offense than in His attitude toward the Sabbath. Edersheim says, "On no other subject is Rabbinic teaching more painfully minute and more manifestly incongruous to its professed object." Pharisaic laws of Sabbath observance had two evident objects, negatively, they aimed *to provide rest,* and positively, they attempted *to make the sabbath a delight.* "The Mishnah includes Sabbath desecration among those most heinous crimes for which a man was to be stoned." So ordinances were provided which were supposed to make a breach of Sabbath rest impossible and to make the Sabbath a delight. At great sacrifice suitable food and clothing would be provided so that the Sabbath might be more appropriately kept. Mourning on the Sabbath was prohibited, for, said they, the Scripture, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it," is applicable to the Sabbath day.

Just how burdensome and exacting were the Sabbath restrictions may be judged from the following Talmudic passage: "In case a woman rolls wheat to remove the husks, it is considered as sifting; if she rubs the heads of wheat, it is regarded as threshing; if she cleans off the side-adherences, it is sifting out fruit; if she bruises the ears, it is grinding; if she throws them up in the air, it is winnowing."

When Jesus was pressed, by His critics, for breaking their

Sabbath laws, He defended Himself and His disciples by references to David's eating the shew-bread on the Sabbath and to the activity of the priests on that holy day. It is to be noted that David did this "when he was an hungered." Does this not argue that the insistent craving of the normal appetite, the nature with which God has endowed His creatures, is more to be regarded than some human conception of Sabbath observance? Is it not as P. Whitwell Wilson remarks, that "no symbol of God is so sacred as man created in His image?" Then too, David was in God's service and so should be strengthened with food in order that he might the better render that service. Though he were not the priest yet he was king, and there are exigencies in life when any man may become both priest and king.

In order for the temple service to be carried out it was necessary for the priests to perform their duties. Hence in the words of Jesus they "profane the sabbath." But said He, "they are guiltless." And since they who only served in the temple were guiltless, though they wrought on the Sabbath day, why should He that is "greater than the temple" be considered guilty for ministering to his own body and the bodies of His disciples, all of them temples of the Holy Spirit? The priests were doing God's service and were guiltless: on the same ground David was guiltless though he wrought on the Sabbath day. Was not Jesus doing His Father's will on all the days? As Matthew 12:7 indicates, *mercy* is above *sacrifice.* Mercy would permit hungry men to satisfy themselves with grain plucked off and rubbed out on the Sabbath.

Then Jesus pleaded an even better reason for His action and attitude. It was that He was "Lord of the Sabbath." Says Edersheim, "He is Lord of the Sabbath, whom we serve in and through the Sabbath. And even this is significant, that, when designating Himself Lord of Sabbath, it is as 'the Son of Man.'" As Geikie explains, He was the "representative of man as man." Jesus realized that "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." Christ "proclaimed spiritual freedom."

§ 46. The Man With the Withered Hand. Mat. 12: 9-14; Mark 3: 1-6; Luke 6: 6-11.

In each of the Synoptic Gospels the record of the healing of the man with the withered hand immediately follows that of the incident of the plucking and eating of the grain on the Sabbath. In each instance Jesus came into collision with the Pharisaical party. Both incidents occurred on a Sabbath and each subjected Jesus to criticism as to His attitude toward the Rabbinic interpretation and regulations with respect to the Sabbath.

The Master, ministering in the synagogue, was aware of the presence of a needy man. Before Him seated amidst the others was "the man with the withered hand." "According to St. Jerome (comm. on Mat. 12: 13), in the Gospel of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, this man was described as a mason, and that he had besought Jesus to restore him, so that he might not have to beg for his bread." Other tradition refers to him as a bricklayer whose family was dependent upon him.

On the other hand there was in the audience of Jesus a group representing the Pharisaical party, with hands whole, but with souls atrophied and hampered by legalistic restrictions which made freedom of the individual conscience an impossibility. Possibly the man with the withered hand was there by their connivance. At least "the Scribes and the Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath; that they might find how to accuse him." Does not this indicate that they would lay a trap for Him? Geikie points out that "The hierarchy would . . . have indicted Him publicly, but for His wide popularity." So they were eager to prejudice the common people against Him by calling to notice some infringement of the Sabbath law by Him. The Synagogue Service provided an occasion for this.

But there does not seem to be perfect clearness about Jewish views of healing on the Sabbath. Says Edersheim, "We have already seen that in their view only actual danger to life warranted a breach of the Sabbath Law. But this opened a large field for discussion." For opinions differed

as to what diseases were dangerous and superseded the Sabbath law. "All applications to the outside of the body were forbidden on the Sabbath . . . Internal remedies, such as were used in health, but had also a remedial effect, might be taken," etc. Aid might be given one who had swallowed glass; a splinter or a thorn might be removed.

When Jesus healed the man with the withered hand He was acting in conformity to the general principle of the Rabbis that it is lawful to do that which saves life on the Sabbath (Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9). Jesus brings this principle most vividly to their attention by citing the case of a sheep being lifted out of a pit on the Sabbath (Mat. 12:11). His argument is, "How much then is a man of more value than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the sabbath day" (Mat. 12:12). If a sheep's life should be saved on a sabbath, evidently because it is of more value even than the sanctity of the Sabbath, why not save a man's life on the Sabbath? Or if his usefulness was impaired by a withered member why not restore that member? Certainly a hand of a man counts for more than a sheep's life. But in their religious prejudice a man's hand mattered little to the Pharisaical party. Tradition was greater than life. As P. Whitwell Wilson says, "Here, as in the Temple, they paid more attention to bulls and goats than to men and women." But more valuable than bulls or goats or men were those interpretations and amplifications of the law, traditions moss-covered if not worm-eaten, yet cherished as the quintessence of religion. And they despised and yearned for the death of any teacher who would dare to deviate one iota from the narrow path of Rabbinic restriction.

In the presence of a cold, calculating, critical casuistry on the one hand, and a man with a withered right hand on the other, Jesus was challenged to be a timorous time-server or a champion of the truth. Luke notes that it was the "right hand" that was "withered" (Lu. 6:6). Why should this man or any man go through life with his strength and dexterity dangling at his side or concealed under his coat for very shame? Why should a man be less than a man? Because of a law? Then scrap the law! Thus our Master, of whom the woman of Samaria said, "Come see a *man*,"

must have reasoned. But he needed not waste many syllogisms on the issue before Him. He expressed His heart to His critics and His friends (for both were in His presence) in the question, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day or to do harm? to save life or to kill?" To delay in the presence of disease over which He had power was the same as to kill; the equivalent to doing harm. So Jesus acted. But not until "He had *looked* round about on them with *anger,* being *grieved* at the hardening of their heart." That indescribable look of anger and grief should have melted any heart. And why that look? Mark answers our question in 3:4b: *"But they held their peace."* Jesus' reference to the sheep in the pit had not aroused their sense of pity and charity. By relating that homely suppositional case Jesus said to them, "As a poor helpless lamb in a hole, so appeals to the 'milk of human kindness' in any man that he must help it out, so this helpless right hand appeals to me. It would be just as wrong morally for me to pass by this unfortunate cripple as for any of you to ignore the pleading eyes of the little lamb or sheep." Jesus saw the restoring of the useless hand to normalcy as His first duty. (Note that the narratives all indicate that Jesus' attention was first fixed on this man. I judge this from the position in 3 Synoptists: Mat. 9:10; Mk. 3:1; Lu. 6:6.) Yet He did not restore the shrunken member until He, by a look, had rebuked the hard-hearted silence of the Pharisaical party. These men "held their peace" though there was before them a pitiable cripple who should have melted their hearts to a point of compassion; they would not commit themselves that Jesus had a right to heal the man though He appealed to their reason. They were time-servers. Like Pilate they were "Opportunists." They sinned against themselves in not admitting that Jesus should restore the withered hand on the Sabbath day.

But Jesus did say, "Stretch forth thy hand." "And he stretched it forth: and his hand was restored." Then those Pharisees "were filled with madness." They did a *foolish thing* when they rejected Jesus. And they continued on in their folly. "Their fanaticism, now fairly aroused, forgot all minor hatreds, and united the hostile factions of the

nation in common zeal for his destruction. No parties could be more opposed than the nationalists or Pharisees, and the Friends of Rome gathered round Herod Antipas at Tiberias, but they now united to hunt Jesus to death . . . The Church and the State had banded together to put 'the deceiver of the people' out of the way as soon as possible."—*Geikie.*

PART V

Second Period of the Galilean Ministry

SECOND PERIOD OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY

From the Choosing of the Twelve Until the Withdrawal into Northern Galilee

§ 47. The Widespread Fame of Christ. Mat. 4: 23-25; 12: 15-21; Mark 3: 7-12; Luke 6: 17-19.

The fame that Jesus had through such mighty works as restoring the "withered hand" (§ 46), and the enmity of such powerful groups as the Herodians and Pharisees, only attracted to Him more people (Mk. 3: 7; Lu. 6: 17). In order to avoid unnecessary hostility, Jesus "withdrew to the sea," where His beneficent works were continued. He had become an attractive figure in the life of Galilee. Yet He was by no means a local character. From afar the eager, if not excited, multitude swarmed to Him—"From Jerusalem and Idumea on the south; from Perea and Decapolis and other parts on the east; and even from the heathen district of Tyre and Sidon on the north." Jesus was so surrounded that He called for a boat lest He would become distressed with the crowd. Here on the Sea of Galilee He performed His accustomed miracles. But as usual He charged those receiving benefit to be silent.

In this desire of the Master, to have His works done quietly yet faithfully and well, Matthew sees the fulfillment of the prophecy of that ideal "Servant of Jehovah" so fully elaborated by Isaiah. He is portrayed as Jehovah's chosen servant, well-pleasing to God, endued with the Spirit of the Lord, and even being destined to judge not only Jews but Gentiles yet as an ideal "Servant of the Lord." He would not *strive* (cf. Mat. 12: 19 with 2 Tim. 2: 24), nor advertise Himself (Mat. 12: 19), but would rather manifest such gentleness, tenderness and care that the weak, timid, sick and suffering would have heart to approach Him. He would not break the "bruised reed" (Mat. 12: 20a) but rather "Bind up the broken-hearted." He came not to crush but to cure. He would not extinguish the dimly lighted

flaxen wick even as His spirit has enflamed many whose love had waxed cold. As a Servant He can afford to patiently plod on, knowing that "Power comes through service." He exemplified that only those who serve well can reign well. His time to "send forth judgment unto victory" had not yet come. Like His remote ancestor after the flesh, David, He could bide his time until the throne was really ready for Him. May we all learn of this "Servant of servants," whose *gentleness* made Him great. In the words of Thomas Gray He never would "wade through slaughter to a throne, and shut the gates of mercy on mankind."

His accessibility, His "Son-of-Man" spirit, makes for that attractiveness which realized the prophecy, "And in his name shall the Gentiles hope [or trust]" Rev. Charles Stelzle puts it as follows: "It is peculiar that Jesus appeals to men of all nations. Moses was a Hebrew, Socrates an Athenian, Confucius a Chinaman, Buddha a Hindu, Mohammed an Arab and Luther a German. But Jesus belongs as much to the African as to the American. He is loved by the Chinese as He is by the Choctaw Indians. To the Welshman Christ seems to have been a Welshman. To the Arabian, Christ seems to have been an Arabian. No matter what a man's nationality he feels at home with Jesus." The hunter, robed in a deerskin, can draw nearer any deer, so Christ, clothed in human form draws near to all humanity. Ah! the wish of "the Great Shepherd of the Sheep" is that all the sheep might hear His voice and come to Him that there might be "one flock, one fold, one Shepherd."

§ 48. The Choosing of the Twelve. Mat. 10: 2-4; Mk. 3: 13-19; Lu. 6: 12-19.

In this section the following points of interest are to be noted:

1. The twelve were supernaturally endowed (v. 1).
2. They were definitely designated (vs. 2, 4).
   Each one was an individual.
3. Their field of labor was restricted (vs. 5, 6).
4. Their message was definite (v. 7).
5. They were bidden to an unsparing ministry (v. 8).
6. They were to "travel light" (vs. 9, 10).

§ 49. The Sermon on the Mount. Mat., Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8: 1; Luke 6: 20-49.

Students of this section of Gospel narrative vie with each other in finding terms sufficiently lofty to describe their thoughts and emotions as they contemplate what is herein contained. Here we have the simple yet the sublime. We ponder what seems the impossible and impractical. There it stands comparatively untried, a challenge to the saintliest, a standard for true followers of Christ, a statement from our Master assuring us of better things yet to be.

Men differ as to whether or not the "Sermon on the Mount" is a sermon, but they all recognize that it comes from a mount. It comes down to us.

Mounts, by the way, are prominent in Bible history. "It was on a mountain that Moses received the law from God; and Elijah, the fire . . . that our Lord was tempted, that He taught, and prayed, and was transfigured and suffered; from a mountain, He ascends to heaven. All the supreme events of his life were thus lofty and universal," etc.—*"The Christ We Forget," Wilson.*

Matthew 5, 6, and 7 contains mountain-top matter. "If an angel, come down to us from the world above, should ask us what our most precious possession is, the masterwork of the Spirit at the height of its power, . . . we would offer him the Sermon on the Mount, and afterwards, only afterwards, a few hundred pages taken from the poets of all the peoples. But the Sermon would be always the one refulgent diamond dimming with the clear splendor of its pure light the colored poverty of emeralds and sapphires." —*Papini.*

Here Christ "seeing the multitude" goes "up into the mountain: and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them." View these two verses composed mostly of monosyllables and see the meaning of it all. He teaches not from a rostrum; He uses no preacher's pulpit nor teacher's "desk." But simply seated on an elevation of land he *opens his mouth and teaches* his disciples who come to him from the multitude. And such teaching as it was! Says Wilson:

"Not a sermon . . . but an edict or ukase, promulgated for all His subjects, by a Sovereign seated on a throne of His own choosing—not designed by men but one of the eternal hills. He did not consult the Emperor, or the Church, or the Sanhedrin, or the Parliament, or the Electors, but spoke with sole and personal authority.—*"I say unto you."* Geikie notes that "The choice of the twelve, and the Sermon on the Mount, were the final and distinct proclamation of His new position."

Edersheim, writing from the standpoint of a Jew who knew literature yet who came to the Sermon on the Mount as a new discovery simply because he had been a Jew in religion, tells of the wonder of this unique teaching and how it affects the "receptive soul when, in the silence of our moral wilderness, those voices first break on the ear, that had never before been wakened to them . . . So the travel-stained wanderer flings him down on the nearest height, to feast his eyes with the first sight of home in the still valley beneath; . . . so the weary prodigal leans his head in silent musing of mingled longing and rest on a mother's knee. So, and much more; for, it is the voice of God which speaks to us in the cool of the evening, amidst the trees of the lost Garden; to us, who, in very shame and sorrow, hide, and yet even so hear, not words of judgment but of mercy, not concerning an irrevocable and impossible past, but concerning a real, and to us possible future, which is that past, only better, nearer, dearer—for, that it is not the human which has now to rise to the Divine, but the Divine which has come down to the human."

The same author refers to the striking contrast between the Talmud (the Jewish interpretation of the Mosaic law) and the Sermon on the Mount. The reading of half-a-dozen pages successively of any part of the Talmud "leaves one" shocked, pained, amused or astounded. For beside the "wit and logic, quickness and readiness, earnestness, and zeal" there is found "terrible profanity, uncleanness, superstition and folly." The Talmud savors of the "unspiritual," the "anti-spiritual," that which is "narrow nationalism," so that it is so "unlike the New Testament," that it is not easy to determine which, as the case may be, is greater, the

ignorance or the presumption of those who put them "side by side." The converted Jew finds in the Sermon on the Mount that which is quite superior to the contents of the Talmud.

In the Sermon on the Mount the humblest Christian finds ground for hope; the weakest sees his possible strength; the poorest his unbounded wealth. Herein the Master expresses unbounded confidence in those whom the world would scorn. Divine provision as herein set forth staggers us. "Christ places His disciples at once in the position to which all other teachers point as an end." We shall study the Sermon by chapters.

Matthew V—Beatitudes

Edersheim is careful to note that "What others labor for, He [Christ] gives." He places his disciples in the kingdom of heaven; He does not here *demand* but *bestows*. *Blessings* promised are not a "reward" of the spiritual state . . . nor yet . . . a result. It is not *because* a man is poor in spirit that his is the Kingdom of Heaven, in the sense that the one state will grow into the other or be its result; still less is the one the reward of the other." Christ is the connecting link; He is the "door" into the Kingdom. "Everything is in Jesus and Jesus everything." In this greatest "Sermon" we see prominent "The Supremacy of love."—*G. Campbell Morgan.* Evidently Jesus, the King on the throne, has good and sufficient reasons for dealing out the largesses that are promised in the "Beatitudes." The Monarch has suitable gifts for his subjects; the Elder Brother for His brethren; He sees a heart preparation for His bounties. He endows where He will. He never lavishes amiss.

The "Kingdom of Heaven" is for the "poor in spirit," Luke 6:20 has it "Blessed are ye poor." Some are "poor" yet not "poor in Spirit." They are proud in spirit, haughty, affecting to be rich; feeling, talking, acting in so far as possible as if they were rich. No blessing is promised for these. Jesus refers to what Geikie is pleased to call "The contented poor who bear their burden meekly, since it comes from God." These will have riches for poverty. Sur-

rendered to God's will in the present they are preparing their souls for entrance into future inheritance.

Jesus gave little if any promise to the rich, who are surfeited with earth's offerings. These are "greedy for riches, the greatest obstacle to the true enrichment of the soul." But Jesus had much consolation for the poor, but surely He did not encourage the "poor" to believe that poverty alone was a preparation for and a guarantee of the "Kingdom of Heaven." Such an attitude would betray imbecility. And as Papini suggests "He could not call to the fullness of the Kingdom of God for the dull and the imbecile." For these are hardly aware of their own condition. But the "poor in spirit" are "painfully aware of their own spiritual poverty . . . of the moral indigence of most men." Being thus willing to recognize the insecurity of their own kingdom of earth they look forward to and eagerly expect the kingdom of heaven. Of such, like Job of old, who in his poverty resignedly said, "The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord;" of such it will be true that their latter end will be better than their former.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." To those mourners referred to here "Weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning." They mourn genuinely as did the publican who prayed "God be merciful to me a sinner;" or as did Jeremiah, "The Prophet of tears" who wished that his head were waters and his "eyes a fountain of tears" that he might "weep for the slain of the daughter of his people night and day." These experience a "godly sorrow for sin," on the one hand, and realize that they "dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," on the other. Their vision is keen. Their senses are not so benumbed by sin that they are unable to perceive the pathetic condition of a sin-cursed world. They muse and so cannot easily be amused. Prophets to sterile ages seem like pessimists. They cannot share in the popular, shallow optimistic view of their age and so are desolate and hopeless except for the word of the Master. Like Hawthorne's character who gazed upon "The Great Stone Face" and could not be satisfied that passing heroes were its

counterparts, yet who himself came to be like what he gazed upon, so these, having seen "The King in His beauty," cannot be content with aught else than Him. They mourn over the tragedy of a ruined race, men marred by misdeeds, souls sullied by sin. These "cannot be comforted." Yet they "shall be comforted." For "Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." There is balm in Gilead..

"Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." These are they who quietly and calmly suffer wrong. They do not fly into a rage when injured, but commit their cause to Him who judges righteously. Their conduct demonstrates their faith in "The Judgment Seat of Christ." Their aim is not present possession, quick victory, but they believe that "He that keepeth his Spirit is better than he that taketh a city." In their *patience they possess their souls.* Soon their power is felt. Never furious but always firm, they "may be *down* but never *out.*" Like the truth which they embody, if "crushed to earth they rise again." Says Papini "They are like water which is not hard to the touch, which seems to give way before other substances, but slowly rises, silently attacks, and calmly consumes, with the patience of years, the hardest granite."

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after *righteousness:* for they shall be filled." Matthew Henry points out that some think that these are they who crave justice among men. They want a "square deal." But they find men unfair. Those who have their cases in hand "neither fear God nor regard men." To such persons hungering and thirsting, longing with all their souls, for down-right honesty and honor there will be given satisfaction. They may expect a city "Four Square" in ethics as well as in dimensions.

Then let us consider the righteousness of God as "that righteousness which God requires, which the Holy Spirit convinces of, which Christ became and which faith secures." —*Scofield.* Men and women who are His disciples long for this. They are not satisfied with diluted righteousness. They yearn for the realization in their own lives of the Law which Jesus sums up in "Love all men," etc. They rejoice to know that "Christ is made unto us . . . righteousness." (1 Cor. 1 : 30). These will find in Christ all that they seek.

He "will pour water on them that are thirsty and floods upon the dry ground."

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." A merciful person is one who pities the sorry plight of another or others and stretches forth a hand to help. When the Psalmist speaks of God lifting him out of the miry clay and putting his feet upon a rock, he is thinking of the mercy of God. Tender mercy and compassion cause one to be charitable with the weak and erring. Shakespeare puts into Portia's mouth his estimate of mercy, closing with the oft-quoted lines:

> "And earthly power doth then show likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice."

Jesus does not promise happiness to the just but to the merciful. Human frailty makes mercy necessary. And those who manifest it will in return experience it when overtaken in fault. "Whereas they shall have judgment without mercy, who have shown no mercy." James 2: 13.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." In his "Word Studies in the New Testament" Vincent gives a very interesting history of *makarois* here translated "blessed." It originally meant *great* and referred to *outward* prosperity or the state of being *rich.* "Its biblical use lifted it into the region of the spiritual" which was even a higher employment of this beautiful word than even the philosophers had brought it into, for they had used it to refer to "inward correctness as the essence of happiness" rather than "outward propriety," in which sense pagans had thought of it. So "the word passed up into the higher region of Christian thought, and was stamped with the Gospel signet, and laden with all the rich significance of Gospel blessedness." This word shakes off "the Stoic's asserted right of suicide as a refuge from human ills, and emphasizes something which thrives on trial and persecution, which glories in tribulation, which not only endures but conquers the world, and *expects its crown in Heaven.*"

In this beatitude *holiness* ("pure in heart") and *happiness* ("Blessed") are put together. Says Henry "Here is the most *comprehensive character* of the blessed; they are the

pure in heart." "Here is the most *comprehensive comfort* of the blessed; They shall see God."

David, conscious of heart pollution, cried out "Create in me a clean heart, O God." The Christian's sincere prayer is ever

"O wash me Thou, without, within,
Or purge with fire if that must be,
No matter how if only sin,
Die out in me, die out in me."

The Christian's buoyant hope and strong faith is "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall *see Him* as He is and every man that hath this hope [fixed] upon Him purifies himself even as He is pure." Yes the "pure in heart" shall see God in Christ who is the "express image" of the "invisible God." This hope is as an anchor to the soul, keeping it steadfast amidst the storms of life.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God." A peacemaker must be a man of peace. He must be of a peaceful disposition. He ever "studies to be quite." He heeds the exhortation "If it be possible,..... live peaceably with all men." He is filled with "the wisdom which cometh down from above which is first pure, then peaceable." He is the responsive recipient of the three-fold and oft-repeated greeting of the Holy Scriptures "May grace, mercy and *peace* be multiplied." His Captain is the "Prince of Peace." He has been led by the Great Shepherd of the sheep to the "waters of quietness" and his soul has been hushed into a heavenly repose by their soothing sound.

But not only is a peace-maker a peaceful man but he is *for* peace. He wars against war, just as his Master "came not to cast peace on the earth but a sword." He is at variance with conflict. Men who cry, "peace, peace when there is no peace" meet with his scorn. He even enters the fray at the risk of receiving blows, and thus shortens the contest. He receives not plaudits but rebuffs from men who enjoy fighting. But when the "sons of God" are *manifested* (Rom. 8:19) for whom the whole creation, burdened and bruised by war, is longing, they will be recognized as the "peace-makers" rather than "peace-breakers" of earth.

"Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Now some folks are persecuted who claim to be righteous yet whose lives do not measure up to their profession. Of this class Peter speaks when he says "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?" Spiritual prosperity, blessedness, is for those who have even suffered in body, for the sake of "justice." When you stand for righteousness those that oppose it will persecute you. You may even be of the class of "victims of Faith" as described in Hebrews 11:35 b—"Of whom the world was not worthy." These were "stoned," as Stephen, the Proto-martyr; "sawn assunder," as Isaiah, the Gospel prophet; "wandered in deserts," as did John the Baptist; were "in dens and caves of the earth," as David, Israel's anointed King; "received not the promise," "not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection," as Huss, Ridley, Latimer and thousands whose names, though not emblazoned among earth's heroes and martyrs, are yet recorded in the Book of Life. When Martin Luther, by posting his 95 theses, had incurred the enmity of the Pope, his life was in jeopardy every hour; when John Knox, by his protests against the false in religion, had provoked the anger of the Queen of Scotland, he was exiled and forced to row as a galley slave; when Chrysostom, because of telling the empress of her sins, was hated by royalty, he was deported and brought to a premature death. Yet these and all of their class endured this persecution because they were conscious of citizenship in "the kingdom of heaven." When men regard the principles of the heavenly kingdom and respect the precepts of Him who was crucified as "King of the Jews" they are bound to run counter to "the princes of this world" who "crucified the Lord of glory." "The Servant is not above his Lord." They opposed Him. They will oppose us if we are champions of the cause of righteousness.

Matthew 5:11, 12 teach that "happy" is the estate of those "reproached" (shamed, reviled) "persecuted" (followed by the injuries, taunts or calumnies of enemies) and falsely evil spoken of for Jesus' sake. Though such treat-

ment is altogether unpleasant, naturally speaking, yet the Great Teacher bids those so tried to "Rejoice and be exceeding glad." It is as James, our Lord's brother says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into 'all sorts of' trials."

And Jesus gives two reasons as a basis for our happiness in such circumstances: first, "For great is your reward in heaven"; and second, "For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The *first* is hope of a worth while reward; the *second* is the knowledge of being the successors of the old time prophets in suffering.

Edersheim maintains that "the object of this first section was to present the Kingdom of God in its characteristic features." These "features" are embodied in the citizens of the Kingdom who are humble (vs. 3), sorrowful because of the sinful state of the world (vs. 4), "Meek," (vs. 5) longing for justice (vs. 6), "merciful" to the unfortunate (vs. 7), "pure in heart" (vs. 8), "peaceable" (vs. 9), "persecuted" for principle (vs. 10).

Epilogue 5: 13-16

"Blessed" (markarios) was a word rich in meaning. Few, if any, in Jesus' day would have conceded the right of the Master to predicate *blessedness* of His lowly followers. Writes T. R. Glover "There was something absurd in this little Jewish sect aspiring to conquer the world. Its origin was too well known. Fifty or sixty years before its founder had been crucified; the verb had no pathos then, only shame . . . The finer religious spirits were all against the Galileans; the artistic temperament, the pious mind, mysticism and imagination, found in legend and cult and mystery what the Jewish peasants could neither give nor understand." What Prof. Glover, with his historic sense, gives as an estimation of the early Christians as men saw them is in striking contrast with what the Master implied in the word "Blessed." To cause the disciples to properly value their position and opportunity Jesus calls them "the *salt* of the earth," and "the light of the world." Salt keeps and makes sound what would corrupt. But impure salt may lose its saltness . . . If you, the salt of the earth, lose your spiritual worth by faint-heartedness, or sloth or dark unfaith-

fulness, your needed energy and efficiency are irreparably gone."—*Geikie.* In Mk. 9:50 we have "Salt is good, but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace one with another." Mark is pleading for a purged people. The offending "hand," "foot" or "eye" is to be done away with rather than have the whole body corrupted. Jesus taught His disciples that they were in a position to be a *blessing* to the world. With their *blessedness* they might *bless* others, but if they should "lose" their "savour"—blessedness —wherewith could they bless the world? Failing to be a blessing to the world, like the salt they would be "good for nothing." So as only pure; i. e., unmixed with earth—salt is "good" so also only separated Christians are "good."

Robert J. Drummond in "Faith's Perplexities" has a chapter on "How does Christianity Persist?" He reviews history and shows how Christianity has encountered "Classic Paganism" at Rome; has coped with "Teutonic heathenism"; has, by accommodation at Constantinople, "degenerated into a mere baptized idolatry;" has not always been powerful enough to resist Mohammedanism which protested against its worshipping of relics, pictures and saints.

Discouraged by the encroachments of the world upon the spiritual life "earnest souls . . . took flight to the hermits' cell or the vows of the monastery." During the dark ages "while the only aspects of Christianity that seemed to appeal to the populace at large were the fantastic and barbaric expeditions of the crusades," in "choice souls like Tauler and the mystics like Thomas ā Kempis and the brothers of the common life, like Francis of Assisi at St. Dominic," in these alone true Christianity seemed to survive.

However black is the picture of nominal Christianity during the Dark Ages the Novatians, the Donatists, the Waldenses, the Albigenses, Jerome of Prague, Huss of Bohemia, Savonarola, Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, Latimer and Ridley and others kept the fire burning upon the altar. These are light-bearers, as Wesley, Whitfield, Carey, McCheyne, Moody and others have been in modern times.

Drummond closes his chapter with an appreciation of

"*Die Stille im Lande:* the quiet, godly, unobtrusive, Christian men and women who have no talents, no gifts to sway the multitude, no way to make their mind or influence felt; but who are strong in faith and prayer and who exercise an influence which the world ignores while it yields to it. Like the praying societies in Scotland after the Revolution settlement, like the Pietists in Germany and Moravian brethren, there are always humble men and women with whom the Spirit finds a welcome abode, whom He moulds and forms and nourishes . . . We forget these patient, silent servants of God. Men mock at their strictness, their prim, simple unworldly ways . . . But the time comes when these despised men and women are all in all to the land. *They are the salt of the earth* and preserve it from ruin."

Then we have the other figure of a "light." The world is dark but saints are "the light of the world." But this light must be exposed. "A city set on a hill cannot be hid" but one in a valley is scarcely visible. No one is so foolish as to conceal a "lamp." Why have it if it is hidden?

So in the figure of the salt Jesus urged His disciples to be "pure," whereas in that of the light He urged them to be propagating the Gospel. *Salt* pleads for a sanctified church; *light* calls for a missionary church. Then all the blessedness of Christ's Kingdom will get out to the world through the disciples.

Relation of Christ to Law (5:17-20)

When Christ had stated the "Beatitudes" which, says G. Campbell Morgan, "taught the Supremacy of Character, the Sovereignty of Love," He took pains to show His appreciation of the "law and the prophets." Said he, "Think not that I came to destroy the law of the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfil." Says Thayer, Christ would "Cause God's will (as made known in the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfilment."

Geikie recognizes that the Great Teacher of teachers, who penetrated to the depths of each principle formulated in the law, knew that "Forms are not the Law." It is required in the Kingdom of God that the truth and spirit of the Law be observed.

The Master made His attitude toward "the law and the prophets" very clear by three statements found in verses 18, 19 and 20. Becoming very materialistic and literal that His hearers would be sure to understand Him, He said that heaven and earth would pass away (a possibility entirely unlikely) before "one jot or one tittle" would "pass away from the law" unfulfilled. A "jot" is "iota" in the Greek (the smallest letter). A tittle is a small point on a Hebrew letter. Some Hebrew characters would not be distinguishable if it were not for the "tittle." What Jesus said was that not the minutest part of the law would pass away unfulfilled. He upheld all the law. "Jewish tradition mentions this very letter *Yod* as irremovable, adding that if all men in the world were gathered together to abolish the least letter in the law, they would not succeed." *Edersheim.*

Then Jesus described the very *least* one in the Kingdom of Heaven as the one who would break one of the least commandments and teach men so to do, while the *greatest* is he who does and teaches the commandments. So evidently the "beatitudes" were not meant to supplant the truth and spirit of the "Decalogue."

Then to make the matter unmistakably clear Jesus warned His disciples that a righteousness exceeding that of the scribes and the Pharisees was necessary to entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now the Pharisees had been strict enough. They filled up the life of the people with a weary round of offerings, ceremonies and purifications; and, not content with the prescriptions of Moses, had added a tedious system of meritorious works; fasts, washings, alms, and prayers . . . Jesus pierced to the heart of the truth. Stripping off all obsolete wrappings of rite and symbol, and repudiating all human additions, He proclaimed the law in its divine ideal, as binding for ever, in its least part, on all ages."—*Geikie.*

Contrasts Between Righteousness of the Kingdom and That of the Law (5:21-48)

These contrasts are introduced by "Ye have heard" and "But I say unto you."

Jesus *first* deals with murder, condemned by the deca-

logue. But He goes back of the overt act. He sees and condemns anger. According to the Jewish law the murderer was "in danger of the judgment." but according to Jesus, he that by the word "Raca" expressed contempt for his brother, was "in danger of the council," and he that said "Thou fool," *Moreh*—an Hebrew expression of condemnation—"shalt be in danger of hell fire." The law took no account of "ill-will;" Jesus did. He knew to what hate leads, as we do also when we think of duels, feuds and murders. Jesus would "nip in the bud" the incipent murder.

Then in Mat. 5:23, 24 the Master teaches that if "thy brother hath aught against thee" it is necessary to "first be reconciled to thy brother" if thou wouldst "come and offer thy gift" acceptably. Bad ethics and good religion will not mix. He whose words are evil will offer an unacceptable worship. Motive counts for much. Unless we love our brother whom we have seen we cannot love God whom we have not been, according to John. Mat. 5:25, 26 teaches that it is practical as well as right to be right with our fellows. It is good policy as well as fine principle to "Agree with thine adversary quickly." Before he "deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer and thou be cast into prison," better settle the matter with him privately or else the very last penny will be exacted of thee. Better pay your adversary what is due, or lose what he owes you, or forgive him, or have him to forgive you. Quarrelling is expensive. Going to law costs. The happiest as well as the richest man is the most agreeable man.

"As with homicide, so, in adultery, the morality of the New Kingdom traced the crime home to the heart, and condemned the unclean glance as a virtual commission of the crime itself."—*Geikie.* Thus is summed up Jesus' teaching as found in Mat. 5:27. To reinforce this severe ethical teaching Jesus stated that it were better to lose even an *eye* or the "right hand" than to be "cast into hell." How concrete this is! There is no mistaking His meaning. It is a case of gratifying an illict desire and suffering the penalty of a lost "body" or of saying "no!" to that forbidden lust.

In an age when "Pharisaic laws of divorce were shamefully loose," when the Rabbis said "If any one see a

woman handsomer than his wife, he may dismiss his wife and marry that woman," Jesus went a step in advance of even the Mosaic provision for divorce (which was a protection for the woman) by saying *"But I say unto you,* that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress," etc. So the New Kingdom requirements in purity are the highest. According to its standards a man is guilty of adultery when he casts a lustful look; he is guilty of sending another into adultery when he divorces his chaste wife, who when divorced would probably marry again and so become guilty of adultery unless there had been valid grounds for divorce. Jesus here challenges us to yield only to the holiest impulses and to do all in our power to save another soul from sin.

In Mat. 5:33-37 the Great Teacher, Jesus,—He with respect to whose ethics E. Y. Mullins in "Why is Christianity True" says, "It is conceded that the ethics of Jesus are the highest yet given to the world,"—discourages the giving of oaths. His prohibition is clear—"Swear not at all." His recommendation is simply—"But let your speech be Yea, yea; Nay, nay." His estimate of other practices was a condemnation. Said He, "Whatsoever is more than these is of the evil."

Geikie explains that the Mosaic law had simply forbidden false swearing (Lev. 19:12), but that "the casuistry of the Rabbis had so darkened the whole subject of oaths that they had, in effect, became utterly worthless." Men swore by heaven, earth, the sun, the prophets, the temple, Jerusalem, the altar, wood used on the altar, sacrifices, temple vessels and even by their own heads. Then the scribes had added a paraphrase of Deut. 23:21 to Lev. 19:12 and so said "Thou shalt not swear falsely *but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths."* Thus they accepted what seemed to them a loop-hole through which they could pass and avoid the keeping of their oaths. For they contended that no oath was binding unless it had a vow of sacrifice with it. Then if that vow was fulfilled the oath was not binding. So deceptions and even perjury was sanctioned if it were "purified by an offering." Herein the Jewish teachers were superficial in their religion but perfectly satisfying to the "gar-

rulous, exaggerating, crafty Jew" who should have been checked rather than encouraged in his prevarications. *Fear* prevented them from swearing "by God" yet when they swore by anything of His work or worship they really swore by Him. Then how *futile* it was to swear by their heads, concerning which they had not power to change so much as the color of "one hair." Jesus' disciples needed no oaths. Conduct which is the expression of character gives sufficient weight to one's words. I have noticed how meaningless are oaths as apologetically given by a Justice of the Peace to a Clergyman in whom the Justice had absolute confidence. They are in such a case superlative *addenda,* if not positive *impedimenta,* and so are either hurried over in a nondescript fashion or totally taken for granted.

Papini says "He who swears to the truth is afraid, he who swears to the false is a traitor. The first believes that the power invoked could punish him, the other is an impostor who profits by the faith of others the more readily to deceive them."

We may be thankful that our law will permit the simple-hearted Christian to "affirm." Such a person will never promise above his power to perform because he knows that by his words he is justified or condemned.

Mat. 5 : 38-42 deals with *Nonresistance.* Where can we today find a nation, a community or even a church that consistently carries out the principle laid down here? A certain branch of Mennonites is called "Nonresisters." Unless they belie their name they incarnate the acme of Christian teaching. Probably it is expecting too much to look for a society of people so far beyond anything Moses required. For the law demanded *Justice.* The punishment was intended to match the offense—not too much nor too meager, but "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," "In times when a head was asked for an eye, an arm for a finger and a hundred lives for a life, a law of retaliation which asked only for an eye for an eye and a life for a life was a notable victory in generosity, appalling though it seems after the teaching of Jesus."—*Papini.* And the teaching of Jesus seems "appalling" to us who have been accustomed to man-made standards.

Luke 6:27-36 includes more general, far-reaching utterances than Mat. 5:38-42, which it seems to parallel. "Love your enemies," "and as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," and "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful" are such sweeping utterances that their very challenge has impressed them upon us. What Jesus is here demanding is that the citizens of His Kingdom be Christlike.

Papini has taken great pains to show how it is practical to "Offer also the other," "To him that smiteth thee on the one cheek." I never saw it literally carried out but believe it would work if some one would only demonstrate it to us. Of course we fancy that we often "turn . . . the other also" figuratively speaking. Perhaps some do sometimes. But the great Italian biographer clearly outlines and evidently believes that Jesus here is presenting a workable theory. So do I. It seems to me, however, that it is best to apply this principle of nonresistance as individuals and not expect nations and smaller groups to apply it, else we will meet many a stumbling-block. But to go back to *Papini's contention.* He says there are three possibilities when one is smitten on the cheek. These are *fight, flight* and *offering the other cheek.* If you fight back or run away you act as an animal, a savage, a natural man would do. When you give blow for blow the situation grows from bad to worse. Either or both may be killed. The latter occurred recently in Kentucky when two brothers 17 and 32 met on a quiet roadway and shot each other to death; the former, in the early history of our republic when Aaron Burr, who once lacked but a single vote of becoming President of the United States, and Alexander Hamilton, "who smote the rock of national resources and abundant streams of revenue burst forth and touched the dead corpse of public credit and it sprang upon its feet"—when these two noted Americans at Weehawken, N. J. fought a duel with pistols and Hamilton fell mortally wounded. So much for fighting back.

Then there is the possibility of flight. Only a coward would "turn tail and run." And to do so would only provoke the one attacking to pursue and probably continue the

punishment. By quitting the scene one admits that he is in the wrong and encourages an attack for which he becomes partly responsible. A laughable incident related by an old time senior friend of the writer seems in place here. In the days of a generation or two ago when youths and even bearded men attended rural schools, and that not always in quest of knowledge, in those what our forbears are prone to call "good old days" of "long, cold winters," of deep snow, of strong men and other wonders of the glorious, distance-enchanted past, then on a certain day in a common country-school house a bearded youth and a brave teacher differed in opinion on some fine point of conduct and honor. Words seemed weapons all too feeble and the brawny pedagogue, probably fearing the charge of effeminacy, attacked his protegee who, realizing that the law was all against him "took to his heels." So they too ran like a fox and a hound until the rapidly progressing pupil, suddenly thinking of his reputation as a "boxer," turned and, fierce as a lion, faced his pursuer who, unable to endure his countenance, in his turn faced about and at each bound lessened the distance between himself and the friendly schoolhouse, his "city of refuge," his "castle." Thus was demonstrated the folly and futility of flight.

But if we cannot most successfully meet an attack with our *fists in a fight* or our *feet in flight* we will be safe to carry out the directions of Jesus and *face our foe* with "the other cheek." This procedure should impress the one that has struck the trying blow with the fact of our control on the one hand or our courage on the other. "Quietness, when it is not stupidity, gentleness when it is not cowardice, astound common souls as do all marvelous things. They make the very brute understand that this man is more than a man."—*Papini.* Who can imagine anything more unnatural than for one to turn the other cheek when struck by an irate foe? But citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven are expected to exceed worldlings.

Then the Master Teacher, perhaps fearful that His pupils would not learn the lesson of Nonresistance from one figure, adds three others. We are given pause when we contemplate how contrary to custom it is to give a cloak

to one who has taken away our coat, to go "the second mile" with one who has compelled the going of one, to "Give to him that asketh thee." All this calls for a magnanimity altogether too uncommon. Rev. Charles Thurgood, Pastor of the Central Christian Church of Pittsburgh, Pa., for 18 years, commonly known as "Brother Thurgood," came the nearest embodying this great Christian principle of nonresistance that I have ever known. He would give his last nickel, his street-car fare to any "tramp" who might ask him for it and then walk home, however far it might be. He would freely forgive or in fact never charge any one guilty of heaping abuse upon him. Of him an old Irish brother said with tears in his eyes, "If Brother Thurgood ever failed, he failed on the goodness side."

Christ calls for modern "Great Hearts." It is said that "Stanton called Lincoln 'a low, cunning clown,' nicknamed him the 'original gorilla,' said that Du Chaillu was a fool to wander all the way to Africa in search of what he could easily have found at Springfield, Illinois. Then Lincoln, who knew well what Stanton had said, made Stanton Secretary of War, because he was the best man for the place." When Lincoln lay in state Stanton said "There lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever seen." Lincoln's magnanimity had mastered Stanton. Christ's prayer for those that had crucified Him and Stephen's "Lay not this sin to their charge" reflect the secret of Nonresistance. It is possible by positive goodness. No negative, spineless supineness will do. It is not enough to stand still when struck. "Turn to him the other" cheek. Show the greedy man that he is mistaken in his supposing that things satisfy by actually giving him more than asked. Exceed the demands of the bully or ruffian. Unman the sinner by Christ's method.

Matthew 5:43-48 deals with *Love to Enemies.* When Jesus said "Ye have heard that it was said 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy,' " He was speaking as one conversant not only with Jewish Rabbinic teaching, but also as one familiar with other ethical teachings. Leviticus 19:

18 advises "Love thy neighbor as thyself" but the Jews did not count all men as their neighbors, so they "hated" the Samaritans and the Gentiles and in this they evidently had Old Testament warrant as Deut. 23:3-6 indicates. They were vindictive.

Gleaning from those that have scanned history's page I note the following facts which reveal to us just how new and revolutionary was Jesus' teaching, "Love your enemies, pray for them that persecute you." Even Israel's Sweet Singer, as the Imprecatory Psalms show, prayed the vengeance of God on his enemies. (See Psalms 7:35; 69 and 109.) We attempt oftentimes to soften down these anathemas of David by saying they are predictive rather than volitive (yet my opinion is that they are imprecations indicating David's attitude toward his enemies, for though he would not lift up his hand against Saul, "the Lord's anointed," yet he was noted as a man of war. For this very reason Solomon and not he built the temple). Then we excuse David by saying that his was a "Stern Age"; that he desired not personal revenge but the honor of God and the church; that the Old Testament saints did not clearly see the teaching of judgment to come and so they wanted to and felt constrained to "straighten out" matters here and now.

But Jesus' desire is that His disciples "may be sons of their Father which is in heaven." "For," said He, "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and unjust." So the command to "love your enemies" is a challenge to be, even while on earth, worthy sons of our Heavenly Father, who is noted for His altruism. Herein is the key to the situation, the revelation of the secret. Jesus is giving a new revelation of God and a new conception of Brotherhood. Disciples of Christ are to surpass the publicans in loving, for even they reciprocate in love (5:46); even Gentiles "salute" their "brethren" but we are to extend the circle of our love and be generous in our salutations. Neither geography nor genealogy should close up the springs of our affections and courtesies. How is all this unlike Rome's unfriendly early attitude toward a stranger, or Mommsen's figure, "a tribe must be either the

anvil or the hammer," or how different Jesus' teaching is from that of Confucius who advocated filial love and general benevolence, but who never thought of condemning hate, or from Buddha's "cold, egotistical, self-seeking love," or from the Rabbis' negative "Do not do," or from Socrates' "Justice," or Aristotle's "Not to resent offenses is the mark of a base slavish man."

So Jesus is here portraying a new type of humanity. Christians are to be so different, yea, so superior to ordinary folks. This no one will deny. As soon as one professes to be a follower of "the meek and lowly Jesus" at once is he expected to be above reproach ethically; and not only that but also to be magnanimous, forgiving, loving and kind. This expectation is at once a compliment to the religion of Jesus Christ and a challenge to our consecration, as well as an opportunity for us to draw upon divine power. But what men demand of us our Master in Mat. 5:48 requires and, if I mistake not, predicts. For the Revised Version translates our passage, "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." Now the predictive future naturally glides into a volitive future which amounts to an imperative. But it seems that the R. V. is right in translating, "Ye shall be perfect," rather than "Be ye perfect" for we must not regard this as a "severe ethic," as a thunderbolt command coming from the throne of an autocrat but rather let us think of Mat. 5:48 as a beautiful statement of character of Christ's real disciples. All that is in "perfect" is predicated of those that *love their enemies* and *pray for those that persecute them.* The Ancients used this word "perfect" (teleioi) when they referred to the *initiates* into the mystery religions. These had learned the secrets of the particular religion into which they had been initiated. Its teachings were no longer mystery to them. Likewise here we have a picture of Jesus' disciples going into the very heart of divine knowledge and practice. The Father "loves" all, even those inimical to Him (Jno. 3:16). If ye recognize God as Father (not a despot, nor a tribal god) then "Love" as does He "that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven." Getting into His teaching, catching His spirit ye become "perfect as your heavenly

Father is perfect." Nothing is here intimated about sinlessness. We do not raise that question. The sermon on the Mount is above and beyond the Decalogue. The "Thou shalt not" gives way to "Blessed are ye." If the Decalogue is the base, then the Sermon on the Mount is the summit or peak. The traveller who has with difficulty scaled the mountain of legalism, having come out of the valley of paganism with its miasmatic fogs, who has climbed up through sacrifices, offerings, ritual and liturgy, now at the top of the mountain inhales the pure air of grace as he, with prophetic vision, beholds the glory of the "Sun of Righteousness." The rare atmosphere of heaven stimulates him to do spiritual exploits. He so far surpasses anything that man has seen or thought that he may well be called "perfect." He is god-like. For him to live is Christ. Shall we reserve this high life for "the Kingdom Age"? By no means.

Matthew 6—Righteousness and Reward

Verse one generalizes. It warns us that if we do our acts of religion (righteousness) before men in order that we be seen of them we will receive no reward from God, our heavenly Father.

The rest of the chapter specifies and instructs us *first* how to (a) give alms (2-4), (b) pray (5-15), and (c) fast (16-18); and *secondly* some of the underlying ideas with respect to these religious manifestations are discussed (19-34). *Almsgiving* is to be done quietly, yea, secretly. Only "hypocrites" make an ado about it. They do this for the reward which they prize, which is men's praise. But when men do not see God sees and rewards.

Prayer is to be offered in one's "inner chamber." Certainly it then will be to God and not like that "most eloquent prayer ever *delivered to a Boston audience.*" If one's prayers are made to God they need not be paraded; if they are offered for their effect upon men they will be public and, of course, empty, "vain repetitions." I think the one who prays is fooled in such a practice rather than his audience, yet he has "his reward" in thinking that men hear and admire his religion. Prayers should be simple because we need not explain our needs to Him in detail. He knows

(6:8). Only extend the hand of faith. He will fill it.

In contrast with the "vain repetitions" of Gentile praying, the Master suggested a simple form of prayer, including:

(1) Recognition of and reverence for God as Father (6:9b).
(2) Request for the kingdom on earth (6:10).
(3) Recognition of and request to God as source of food (6:11).
(4) Petition to be forgiven (6:12).
(5) Prayer to be kept from temptation (6:13).

Then to show that the spirit behind the prayer is important Jesus specifically said, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (6:14, 15). So the character and practice of the one who prays is more important than the form of the prayer. As James, our Lord's brother, says: "The effectual fervent prayer *of a righteous man availeth much.*"

Fasting is to be done in such a way as *not to be seen to men as fasting.* When the person who fasts is of a "sad countenance," when he "disfigures his face" he is "as the hypocrites." With anointed head and glad, washed face we should fast. Men need not know of our fastings. God will know. That is sufficient. Let ours be His recompense and not the reward of men.

So in *fasting* as in *almsgiving* and *praying* we are to do it with a God-consciousness. If our Father sees, we have gained our point. Harnack has said that "Religion is living in time for eternity *under the eye* and with the help of God." In no part of the Bible is there greater stress laid on the fact that *God, our heavenly Father, sees, appreciates and will reward,* than in Matthew 6. The refrain is "thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (verses 4, 6, 18).

The "Underlying Ideas" referred to above are worthy of brief note. *Almsgiving* naturally follows a belief that heaven's bank is the only safe repository for a saint's resources. Those who give alms instead of hoarding their

money fear neither moth nor rust nor thieves. They are heavenly minded "for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also" (6:19-21). *Prayer* presupposes a recognition of God as Lord and an eye "single" to His glory. He that serves mammon while he professes to serve God only wastes time spent in prayer (6:22-24). *Fasting* is done by those that believe that *"the life is more than food* and the body than the raiment." And all three of the spiritual exercises here considered are carried on with the same abandon as is witnessed in the birds that are fed by "your heavenly Father," in the lilies that are arrayed more gorgeously than was Solomon, in the grass clothed by God.

So it behooves us to "Seek . . . first his kingdom and his righteousness" and then we can rest assured that "all these things shall be added unto" us. Let not providing against *tomorrow's* evils hinder our spiritual service today (6:25-34).

Matthew 7 may be interpreted as Edersheim so thoughtfully suggests: *"First,* the Kingdom of God cannot be *circumscribed* as you would do it (7:1-5). *Secondly,* it cannot be *extended,* as you would do it, by external means (7:6), but cometh to us from God (7:7-12), and is entered by personal determination and separation (7:13, 14). *Thirdly,* it is not *preached* as too often is attempted when thoughts of it are merely of the external (7:15, 16). *Lastly,* it is not *manifested* in life in the manner too common among religionists, but is very real and true and good in its effects (7:17-20). And this Kingdom received by us is like a solid house on a solid foundation, which nothing from without can shake or destroy" (7:24-27).

§ 50. The Centurion's Servant. Mat. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10.

Having finished His Sermon, Jesus again enters Capernaum, "that little fishing town" in and around which so much connected with the life and ministry of Jesus gathers. "And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell" (Lu. 10:15). Like Chorazin and Bethsaida her privileges were great.

Prominent Features of Incident:

1. The *Centurion* was a Gentile. "He was captain of the troop quartered in Capernaum, and in the service of Herod Antipas."—*Edersheim.* Strange it seems that this military man should have had such faith in Jesus. His addressing Him as "Lord" (Kurie) indicates that he held Him in reverential esteem.

2. The *Condition* of the boy, "servant," was desperate. He was "bed-fast," "terribly tortured." What the "Ruler of a hundred" literally said was, "My boy has been thrown (upon a bed) in the house, a paralytic, grievously tortured." So a Gentile comes to the Master to present a dire need.

3. The *Condescension* of Jesus is noteworthy. Said He, "When I have come, I will heal him" (Mat. 8:7). He did not discriminate against the Gentile. He did not even wait to be asked to heal the "servant." The need presented was the prayer. Yet Luke, who wrote to the Gentiles (Greeks) says that "he sent unto him elders of the Jews, asking him that he would come and save his servant" (7:3). "Jews" should observe that Christ responded to a Gentile's need; "Gentiles" should be willing to go even through Jews to get to Jesus.

4. The *Confession* of the Centurion is deserving of our attention. He plead his "unfitness" (Mat. 8:8; Lu. 7:6). This was not a confession of low character, but a courteous regard for the Jewish aloofness from the Gentiles. "The houses of Gentiles were considered as defiled and as defiling those who entered them."—*Edersheim.*

In a real sense we should feel "unworthy" to have Jesus come to us. But he, though of a Jewish mother, is "Son of Man." He broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile.

5. The *Confidence* of the Centurion, rather than the cavilling of the Pharisaical party, arrests our attention (Mat. 8:9, 10; Lu. 7:7, 8). Said he, "Only speak by means of *word.*" He had so much faith in Jesus' "word" that he did not feel that Jesus needed to go in *person.* "His homage had been like the wave-offering before God, of the first sheaf of the Gentile world."—*Geikie.* Since a prayer would

do why have the person of Christ at the bedside of the paralytic? So a practical Gentile grasped Jesus' method.

Christianity is of universal application. It did not require a knowledge of Jewish traditions to appropriate Christ. The soldier reached out the hand of faith and took blessing from Jesus; the scholastic would have quibbled over the philosophy of healing and prayer.

6. *Community* of Faith rather than descent (Mat. 8:11). "It was a common belief that in the day of the Messiah redeemed Israel would be gathered to a great feast, together with the patriarchs and heroes of the Jewish faith." —*Edersheim.*

Jesus does not exclude the Jew from this feast, but on the other hand includes him as the names of "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" indicate. But with these "Israelites indeed" "many from the rising of the sun and the setting of the sun" shall come and *recline* at the feast in the kingdom of heaven. Verily *all that are of faith are children of Abraham.*

7. *Calamity* of unbelievers. To show that unbelief excludes, Jesus again resorted to Jewish language. "Gehinnom —of which the entrance marked by ever-ascending smoke, was in the valley of Hinnom, between two palm trees—lay 'beyond the mountain of darkness.' It was a place of darkness, to which in the day of the Lord, the Gentiles would be consigned. On the other hand, the merit of circumcision would in the day of the Messiah deliver Jewish sinners from Gehinnom."—*Edersheim.* Probably "outer darkness" stood for "a place of hopeless, endless night." "The weeping and gnashing of teeth" indicated sorrow and anger in Rabbinic thought. Ah! the Jewish leaders had a "hell" for Gentiles into which they were about to drop. Faith in Christ is the touchstone. A gentile Centurion's faith is the key which unlocks the power and promises of God through Christ "and the servant was healed in that hour" is the

8. *Concluding* statement in a narrative of mighty faith and miracle.

§ 51. The Raising of the Widow's Son at Nain. Luke 7: 11-17.

Possibly the day following the healing of the centurion's servant ("soon afterwards" v. 11 is given *on the next day* by many ancient authorities) Jesus, with His disciples, went to Nain, "a village twenty-five miles to the southwest" of Capernaum. "A great multitude (v. 11) followed Him, for He was in the time of popularity as to His ministry. As He approached the city He met a funeral procession. The Lord of Life came into the presence of death. Two features of this funeral were especially adapted to make an appeal to Him who said, "I am the Life": (a) the "dead was the *only* son of his mother" and (b) "she was a widow." So we do not wonder that He that was the *"only begotten son"* (Jno. 1: 14, 18) of the heavenly Father, whose mother evidently was a *widow* "had compassion on her and said unto her, Weep not."

Jewish custom, as well as the especially deep grief of this childless widow, had brought out "much people of the city" (v. 12) yet they were powerless in the presence of death. But not so with our Lord. His familiarity with the customs and belief of the Jews enabled Him to see the importance of using His power then and there. Not only did Jesus appreciate the struggle that had been made to spare the life and the "terrible burst of sorrow" upon the death of the "only son" but He knew the Jewish ideas about death and that which follows the same; "knowledge just sufficient to make even the most pious Rabbi uncertain of his future." Jesus knew how hard it is to be submissive when God's love is not evident and how at such times the heart may rebel. Sitting on the floor, abstaining from meat and wine, providing two flutes and one mourning woman, having a funeral oration at the grave, "But in all this painful pageantry there was nothing for the heart of the widow, bereft of her only child."—*Edersheim.*

And when we consider the presence of the multitude we are led to wonder whether they were present more to sympathize with the bereaved than to pay their mute respects to death so mysterious and with such tenacious grip. But

when the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" bade the widow to "weep not," He meant to tell her that soon the occasion of weeping would be no more. For "He came nigh and touched the bier. He dreaded not the greatest of all defilements—that of contact with the dead, which Rabbinism, in its elaboration of the letter of the law, had surrounded with endless terrors."—*Edersheim.* Then He spake with authority words suited to the need—a command brief but authoritative—"Young man, to thee I say, Arise." But four words in the original Greek carry this mighty message, this dynamic deliverance. Jesus addressed His order not to a corpse but to a "young man," *Neaniske.* When John said, "I have written unto you, *young men,* because ye are *strong* (1 John 2:14), he used this same term. Then said He, "to thee I say," *soi lego,* to put meaning into, rather than *laleo,* to simply utter. "Arise," *egertheti,* carried the command. It conveyed an urgency. There was no lying there a pale corpse when He who has the keys of life and death had given such a behest. So "The dead sat up and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother." Death had cruelly snatched him from his loving mother; Jesus robbed death of its victim and presented the living son to the jubilant mother.

Then those present realized that in their very midst was a "great prophet." "Fear seized all and they glorified God saying . . . God has visited His people" (v. 16). On this Geikie writes, "It was at Shunem . . . a village on the other side of the very hill on which Nain stood, that Elisha had raised the only son of the lady who had hospitably entertained him; the luxuriant plain of Jezreel, stretching out beneath, had been the scene of the greatest events in the life of Elijah, who had raised to life the son of the widow in the Phenician village of Sarepta, on the far northern coast. No prouder sign of their greatness as prophets had lingered in the mind than such triumphs over the grave . . . "At sight of the young man once more alive, the memory of Elijah and Elisha was on every lip."

This evident miracle, together with that of the healing of the centurion's servant, was reported even far to the south in Judea and surely even to "remote Perea."

§ 52. John the Baptist's Last Message. Mat. 11: 2-30; Luke 7: 18-35.

While Jesus was doing His mighty works and thereby causing the circulation of the report of the same in "all the region round about," John the Baptist, His sacrificial forerunner, was languishing in the dungeon of Machaerus. Though young in years yet he was in hourly expectation of death.

While Herod Antipas protected him from Herodias, yet he did not give him his freedom, but permitted John to receive visits from his disciples who told him of Jesus' works. John had baptized Jesus; had seen the Spirit descend like a dove upon Him; had heard from heaven in regard to Him, yet, as Geikie notes, "As a *Jew* he had clung to Jewish ideas of the Messiah, expecting, apparently, a national movement which would establish a pure theocracy under Jesus."

But Jesus had not carried on affairs as a Hero-King might be expected to do. He had not behaved like a Messianic-Monarch should. Why had he left John in prison? Doubtless John had time for such questionings. The gloomy prison would go far towards darkening his own soul. "A child of the desert, accustomed to its wild freedom, he was now caged in a dismal fortress, with no outlook except black lava-crags, and deep gorges, yawning in seemingly bottomless depths."—*Geikie.* Though John, fired with prophetic enthusiasm in his heydey, said, "He must increase but I must decrease," yet when deserted by the fickle people and not even visited by Jesus, he naturally experienced a sad *reaction.* He missed the boundless freedom of the desert, the enthusiasm of the multitudes that had hung on his words. So John, the cousin of Jesus, the forerunner of the Messiah, the preacher, the character of strength, yet modesty, who was taken for the Messiah, yet who professed to be but "a voice"—this "man sent from God whose name was John" asked Jesus, "Art thou he that cometh or look we for another?"

Consider *Jesus' answer* to this frank question. As usual Christ was attracting earth's needy to His beneficent ministry. So as Luke 7: 21 records: "In that hour he cured

many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight." John's disciples witnessed these works. Then Jesus bade them to go and tell John just what they had seen (Mat. 11:4, 5; Luke 7:22). Here again Jesus let His works speak. Probably this form of answer would serve John better than mere words. He who was giving sight to the blind would not leave in mental darkness him upon whom "alone our Lord pronounced a panegyric."—*Wilson.* He preached "good tidings" to the poor. He must have delivered something that would serve as an answer to John whose poverty was evident.

With this report of wonderful works the Master sent to that inhospitable prison a "Beatitude"—"Blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me." Ah! Jesus knew what was troubling John. He was aware of His being a disappointment to John, for whom He had only eulogy. He was careful not to upbraid His forerunner. He did not disregard John's doubts nor reprove his inquisitiveness.

"There lies more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

So Christ *beatifies* him that does not stumble over what He essentially was and is. Jesus certainly knew that the religious "Builders" of His day were rejecting Him; that He was a "stone of stumbling and a rock of offense" (1 Pet. 2:7, 8), and He also knew what meaneth the Scripture "Behold I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (1 Pet. 2:6). John's doubts were but an echo of his age. As he saw it, Jesus promised much at times but He seemed to be heading in the direction of defeat. Mayhap John had premonitions of the executioner's ax for himself, and saw the cross looming up on the horizon for Christ. And since John was not in the Kingdom he likely shared what Paul states of the Jews and Greeks with respect to the cross: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor. 1:23). How could John be expected to understand the necessity of Christ's victory through defeat, His life through death, His exaltation through humiliation, since we know that not one

of the disciples, who were with Him through His ministry, was prepared for His crucifixion. The story is well known. Christ went to Calvary *alone!* No one on earth could "watch with Him." His death left His disciples disconsolate and hopeless. (Read Luke 24.) We trust John passed through his period of darkness and so realized the "blessedness" predicted of all who are not confounded at Christ's death, which is the *touchstone* of each individual life.

Having sent the two messengers back to cheer the hapless occupant of the prison Jesus *commended* John in a fitting *eulogy* (Mat. 11:7-15; Lu. 7:24-28). Surrounded by the very multitudes that had thronged John when he preached, aware that these people knew of John's present plight and test of faith, Jesus in "tender, lofty and fervent" words gave His encomium of John. John was no weakling, so spineless that like a reed, he could be "tossed about with every wind . . . of doctrine." Human opinions mattered nothing to John the Baptist. He was God-taught in the solitude of the desert as was Moses in Midian and Paul in Arabia.

"As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form," as a Gibraltar, John stood dauntless, impregnable.

John was no Epicurean. He lived not to eat dainties and wear "soft raiment." Such men were in "kings' houses" not in a prison dungeon for preaching against a monarch's sin. John was no ease-loving courtier. He had the heart of a Nathan, and the words of a Chrysostom, each of whom dared to fearlessly denounce the sins of royalty.

John was "more than a prophet." Did not the prophets "search what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify"? (1 Pet. 1:11). But John saw his prophecy realized. Then he excelled other prophets in being the forerunner of the Messiah.

Yea, there is no greater than John. Yet in a certain sense "he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." For surely those that really get into the "Kingdom of heaven" are not beset by doubts as to who Christ is. The Church is built upon the confession first made by Peter according to the revelation from the Father in heaven.

We all rest on this "rock." Singularly enough it was the *forceful* Peter who bared "this rock."

By "He that is *less* in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," Henry understands "the apostles and ministers of the New Testament, the evangelical prophets." The comparison is to office rather than sanctity. "John preached Christ coming; they preached Him crucified and glorified."

Jesus here suggests much about force or "violence" (Mat. 11:12; cf. Luke 16:16). "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," etc. This is not to the disparagement of John. Jesus is praising John who "started something." "For all the prophets and the law prophesied *until* John." They simply prophesied. John began the fulfillment of those prophecies. He was God's instrument to bring things to pass. "Things happened" when John came on the scene. He was energetic, rather iconoclastic. "And if ye are willing to receive him, this is Elijah, which is to come." He had the spirit of that energetic prophet of old who moved quickly and effectively and usually boldly.

Then it is clear that since "Biazetai" is middle or passive, we may translate "From the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven presses violently," etc. How true this was. John, the Champion of the kingdom, brought it to men's attention, as Peter the Hermit preached the crusades to a superstitious church in his day.

But, as usual, only "He that hath ears to hear" is able to hear.

Then follows in Mat. 11:16-19, *Jesus' Condemnation* of His generation. First, He condemned His generation for not appreciating the great and grave realities of the time. As if hard pressed for a suitable simile Jesus asked, "But whereunto shall I liken this generation?" Then He lights upon the figure of "children playing in the market places." Those about Jesus *trifled with the valuable,* the unspeakably precious, as tiny children "in the empty market places, playing at marriages and mournings, some making music on the flute for the one; some acting like mourners for the other; but neither the cheerful piping, nor the sad beating of the breast, pleasing the companion audience."—*Geikie. Then*

again Christ's generation was like the children here described in that they were not satisfied. John was very careful to uphold the customs of the Rabbis; so he fasted. Yet they said, "He hath a devil." Jesus mingled among men, even eating with them. Him they accused of gluttony and of being "a friend of publicans and sinners." "And wisdom is justified by her works." Christ challenged His generation to view the deeds of both John and Himself if they would pass upon their merits. He trusted His works to vindicate Him in the eyes of those whose ears did not catch His words.

Then as samples of a trifling, dissatisfied generation He referred to cities which had had opportunities to see and know, yet had rejected Him. Tyre and Sidon, long since destroyed, were not so hard-hearted as Chorazin and Bethsaida of Jesus' day. Sodom, a memory of evil deeds, would have stood had it only enjoyed the privileges of Capernaum. Yet on Chorazin and Bethsaida Jesus pronounced a "Woe" and of Capernaum He predicted "Thou shalt go down to Hades."

"At that season" Jesus showed His preference for the humble (Mat. 11:25-27). As in Paul's day "the wisdom of this world" was "foolishness with" Christ. Humble, responsive, child-like faith received what the religious leaders rejected. "The common people heard him gladly, but their teachers opposed Him, and He did not will to reveal the Father to these "schoolmen" but rather to the "obedient children." So also, to encourage them He invites them to share His yoke. He also serves under a yoke. Yet His "yoke is easy." He promises *soul rest.*

§ 53. Anointing of Jesus in the House of Simon, the Pharisee. Luke 7: 36-50.

1. Why did Jesus eat with a Pharisee?

Since Jesus was a recognized, if not indeed a popular, Teacher, it was fitting from the standpoint of etiquette that Simon, the Pharisee, should entertain Him in his home. Then the antagonism which later became so acute between Christ and the Pharisees was just in its inception at this time of Jesus' Galilean ministry. Jesus had begun to affirm

great truths; He had announced principles that were running counter to the teaching of the Pharisees; but "the opposition to Him was not yet fully developed."—*Edersheim.*

But even though the Master is being entertained in a Pharisee's home surely we cannot expect Him to conform to Pharisaical ways and ideas. "In etiquette, as in every social accomplishment, Jesus was perfect; He was entirely at His ease in any company, but He knew that *etiquette* is a concealment."—*Wilson.* So we are not surprised that Jesus regarded the higher value as the more important and gave it place. He would not spurn love and devotion for social custom. When, therefore,

2. A woman, a sinner, entered the house, contrary to "good form," and gave special attention to Jesus He did not rebuke her.

In those days, in that country, they *reclined* to eat. So Jesus' feet would be "turned away from the table in the direction of the wall." This woman evidently took unusual liberty when she entered Simon's house. Says Geikie, "Houses in the East are far from enjoying the privacy we prize so highly. Even at this time, strangers pass in and out at their pleasure, to see the guests, and join in conversation with them and the host" . . . "though women could not with propriety make their appearance at such entertainments."

Why then was she there? Likely she had heard the Master's "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," etc. She had taken His invitation seriously. Doubtless she little dreamed of what effect her unceremonious *intrusion* would have on the "dinner party." Her soul was hungry. She had learned where was the "Bread of Life." Her "alabaster cruse of ointment" bespoke her purpose in coming. She was there to anoint some one. But His position at the table as well as her modesty (for He had provoked her best) prevented her pouring the contents of her cruse on His head. But she could approach His feet. But before she could pour her perfume on His feet she was "weeping." Did she think of her sins and shed the tears of a penitent, or was she weeping for joy at being in His presence? At any rate, her tears fell like drops of rain on

His feet. (So suggests *brechein,* the Greek form here used.) Then "As if surprised, or else afraid to awaken His attention, or defile Him by her tears, she quickly wiped them away with the long tresses of her hair that had fallen down and touched Him as she bent over His feet."—*Edersheim.* Then as if to express her appreciation of the feet that had brought Him who carried the message of peace to her storm-tossed soul (Rom. 10:15) she "kept kissing his feet and continued to anoint them with the ointment."

3. The Pharisee's Opinion.

Little wonder that Simon the Pharisee questioned the conduct of the woman and soon formed an opinion of Him that tolerated it. No Pharisee could understand that scene! So his contemptuous "This man" (7:39; cf. 15:2) is followed by his "Contrary to Fact" conditional sentence. Said he, "If he were a prophet" (*But He is not* is implied). Simon marvelled that Jesus permitted this "forgiven" (verse 48) though fallen woman to "touch" Him. He argued that Jesus must be ignorant of her character. Ah! Jesus knew all that and He knew of her cleansing as if all the impurity of her past flowed out with those hot tears which fell upon Him as the sins of the race lit upon His holy body and pure soul. Jesus "was more than a Prophet—the Saviour of sinners."

4. Jesus' Illustration.

The Master, reading the Pharisee's thoughts, gave a vivid illustration of what He wanted Simon to apply to himself (verses 40-43). This was clear to Simon. From his Jewish mode of reasoning the one forgiven most would naturally love most.

5. The Application—A Reproof.

Evidently the woman had good grounds for manifesting love. "Her sins" were "forgiven," for this reason "she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." The attention paid Jesus by this penitent woman was in striking contrast to Simon's *discourteous* neglect. Jesus' reproof was direct. "I entered *thy* house (not the woman's); thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time

I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet, etc." Comparisons are always odious. Certainly the Pharisee rather than the woman suffered by comparison in this case. Then to reassure her and to further reprove him, Jesus repeated to her what He had formerly related to him. "Thy sins *have been* forgiven."

6. The Query (verse 49).

Jesus' forgiveness of sins was ever startling to the unbelief of His day. No ordinary Rabbi forgave sins. So we naturally expect this question of surprise after Jesus has spoken the word of pardon. But His only reply is His, "Thy faith hath saved thee. Go *into* peace," addressed to the woman of faith. Faith, love and gratitude had come with her. Jesus sent her away with hope and peace.

§ 54. Christ's Companions on His Second Preaching Tour. Luke 8: 1-3.

Of this portion of Scripture Edersheim writes, "Christ was now returning to Capernaum from that Missionary journey of which Nain had been the southernmost part." "Instant in season and out of season," He was "preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God."

But He was not alone. There accompanied Him "the twelve," His chosen ones, "and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities," trophies of his grace, monuments of His power over demons and disease.

In this little group we see the nucleus of the Church. Men and women personally attached and greatly obligated to the Master went with Him to learn, assist and "minister unto them of their substance." The author of Ecce Homo writes, "Christ's Kingdom is a true brotherhood founded in devotion and self-sacrifice." "Disinterested devotion" is here evident.

Woman, though she first ate of the "forbidden fruit," was, in keeping with God's grace, permitted to bring the Redeemer, Him that would "bruise Satan's head" (Gen. 3 : 15), into the world. She was "last at the cross and first at the tomb." She is here in our Lord's own Galilee to minister to His needs even as she was in the house of Simon,

the Pharisee, to care for and honor Him when He had been neglected by His cold, critical host.

Ah! Woman owes much to the Saviour and wherever His Gospel is preached she is there to pay her debt by deeds, gifts and words of love. She remembers and appreciates that Christ's Gospel has lifted her. Loving service is offered to Him whose salvation, fully realized, will one day bring her back to her Edenic state of equal lordship with the man, who under the influence of the Saviour is a "Christian Gentleman," giving honor unto the wife as a weaker vessel (Peter).

Of those in this group three are named, "Mary that was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna."

Edersheim notes that Mary Magdalene (i. e., Mary of Magdala) "not only ministered to Jesus in His life, but with eager avarice of love, watched 'afar off' His dying moments, and then sat over against the new tomb of Joseph in which His body was laid (Mat. 27:55, 56) . . . But however difficult the circumstances may have been, in which the Magdalene came to profess her faith in Jesus, those of Joanna must have been even more trying. She was the wife of Chuza, Herod's Steward—possibly, though not likely, the Court-official whose son Jesus healed by the word spoken in Cana . . . Susanna means the 'lily.'" The others here associated with the Master are not named. Sufficient was their reward to minister to Him.

Geikie in commenting on this section avails himself of the opportunity to note Jesus' association with women. He first remarks, "The religious enthusiasm of the age, always seen most in the gentler sex, had already spread among all Jewish women, for the Pharisees found them their most earnest supporters." Then he continues, "It was only natural, therefore, that Jesus should attract a similar devotion. His purity of soul, His reverent courtesy to the sex, His championship of their equal dignity with man, before God, and His demand for supreme zeal in all, in the spread of the New Kingdom, drew them after Him. But so accustomed were all classes to such attendance on their own

Rabbis, that even the enemies of Jesus found no ground for censure in their ministrations."

In referring to Mary Magdalene Geikie writes, "There is nothing whatever to connect her with the narrative of the anointing of Jesus in the house of Simon, the Pharisee," for to do so confounds what the New Testament distinguishes by the clearest language. The fact that she suffered from demoniacal possession does not prove that she led a sinful life. "Never before has a figment so utterly baseless obtained so wide an acceptance as that which we connect with her name. But it is hopeless to try to explode it, for the word has passed into the vocabularies of Europe as a synonym of penitent frailty."

§ 55. Warnings to the Scribes and Pharisees: "An Eternal Sin." Mat. 12: 22-45; Mark 3: 20-30.

Jesus, wearied with His strenuous preaching tour, must have longed for that quietness of spirit which is found only in solitude or in company with a few intimate friends. But He could not get away from the multitude even to eat. The crowd was curious; and Jesus' friends were solicitous for Him, thinking that He had lost His mind; even His mother was, in company with her children, attempting to take Him home, probably to save the family name as well as Him.

And, strange to say, all this stir was due to His power and helpfulness. He had healed one "blind and dumb" (Mat. 12:22). He had cast out the demon. So amazed were the people that they asked, "Is this the son of David?" The Pharisees' reply to this reveals their maliciousness. Their jealousy was evident; their unfairness was patent. They attributed His power over demons to Beelzebub, the old god of the Philistine city of Ekron, but by the Jews regarded as Satan. Beelzebub means "god of flies." The Jews had, at times, disdainfully changed this word to Beelzebub, "god of dung."

It is clear that according to the Pharisees Christ's deeds were Satan's doings. Thus He was incarnating Satan. So, as they fancied, Christ's kingdom was not God's but Satan's.

But Jesus' reply was a refutation of their groundless charge. If Satan had used his power to cast out demons,

his own aids, then his kingdom would have been divided against itself. "It was proverbial that civil strife is fatal to a state."—*Bruce.* Then the Jews were exorcists. So Jesus, turning their argument upon them, asked, "And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out?" Were they willing to admit that Satan wrought through them?

Then follows His own statement of the case, "But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." The Spirit of God, working through Jesus of Nazareth, was spoiling Satan's house. He could bind the strong man, and He did so, and then did as He pleased with the house. And these Pharisees, not being "with" Christ, were "against" Him. They would have *scattered* His work. But every blow aimed at Him, "the Son of man," fell upon the Holy Spirit. Now "Son of man" is Christ's human name. By this designation He loved to be known upon earth, for it told the story of His humiliation (Phil. 2), His identification with mankind. As the "Son of man" He "came to seek and to save" the lost (Lu. 19:10). So the "Word" incarnate is "the Son of man." Over this the Jews stumbled and He could have forgiven them for not recognizing Him, but when they attributed the works done through Him to Satan, they were crediting the devil with the works of the Holy Spirit and so discrediting the Third Person of the Godhead.

These Pharisees *said* the wrong thing. As Mark puts it, they were "guilty of an eternal sin: because they *said,* He hath an unclean spirit. Christ's works were good. Why should they attribute them to Satan? So their sin expressed itself in glib talk. Jesus reminded them of their responsibility for "every idle word." *Idle* here means *unprofitable.* Their words, to translate the Greek word literally, did *not work.* And words mark us. They disclose the heart. "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." A good tree produces good fruit. So "the tree is known by its fruit." Christ was good and the fruit of His life was good; the

Pharisees bore such fruits that Jesus could not consider them to be of God. Geikie says that their sin was such as to indicate that the "Religious faculty was destroyed." For by them the "Holy Spirit, by whom alone the heart is changed was contemned as evil."

In keeping with the thought of the preceding verses when Jesus was asked for a "sign" by the scribes and Pharisees, He replied that "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet." To the Ninevites Jonah's sign was his message with its clear, authoritative, prophetic ring. While Jonah's three days' experience "in the belly of the whale" was such as to give him a message with a certain sound to "the men of Nineveh," yet Christ was "a greater than Jonah" before His death and resurrection which Jonah's experiences prefigured. So "The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold a greater than Jonah is here." The Ninevites had keener spiritual perception than the Pharisees, though the latter were experts in religion while the former were Gentiles and mostly ignorant (Jonah 4:11). Likewise the "Queen of the south," who gladly heard Solomon, showed ability to appreciate wisdom and worth, such as these religious leaders among the Jews lacked.

Appropriate to this discussion of casting out demons is that of providing something to occupy the place formerly held by the demon. If the house is simply cleansed of demons—"swept and garnished"—(Edersheim believes this refers to Israel as a house cleansed from the demon of idolatry and "garnished" with all manner of Pharisaic adornment), if the house is only cleansed of evil spirits and not filled with the Holy Spirit, "the last state . . . becometh worse than the first." The "evil generation," addressed by Jesus, was worse than idolatrous heathen. The Stronger One was not within to keep out the strong one. Yet the Pharisees were quite sufficient, as they supposed, in matters religious.

§ 56. The True Kindred of Christ. Mat. 12: 46-50; Mark 3: 31-35; Luke 8: 19-21.

The scene is easily imagined. Jesus is inside. His mother and brothers are without calling to Him to come out and go home. But the crowd prevents His hearing. Whatever the people thought as to Jesus' duty to His mother, He insisted that the interests of the Kingdom came first.

We see a thronging crowd, an engaged Christ, a concerned parent and brothers, and loyal disciples. The people *needed* Christ, His message and ministry. His kin *wanted* to save Him and maybe enjoy Him. He knew His duty and real kin.

Notice the dignity Matthew gives to Him. *"He stretched forth his hand."* As Ahasuerus extended the royal scepter to Esther.

Mark says, *"And looking round."* The ministry of a look. A servant may look. "So again when He spoke of His cross and Peter began to rebuke Him, here only we read, 'And when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter' (Mk. 8: 33). There must have been something in that look never to be forgotten; a flash of light, a beam of the glory, which made its dwelling in that lowly Servant. So again in the case of him who came kneeling down and asking, 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?' here only do we read that Jesus, looking upon him, loved him, etc. Surely not in vain is the *look* recorded. Let servants mark this: there is no small ministry in a single look, be it of love or grief or anger. It may speak what words cannot express . . . It speaks truly, hence its deep power" (Jukes).

It is striking to note how the Synoptics record what Jesus said when He was describing His spiritual kingdom. Matthew says: "Whosoever shall do the will of my *Father,"* etc. But Mark has *God* instead of *Father.* Matthew, writing to and for the Jews who already believe in *God,* is interested in having them believe in God as *Father.* And not only Father, but "my" Father. Surely He asserted that God was His Father in a special sense. He was "the only begotten Son," hence the Messiah of the Jews. And Mat-

thew makes Him further limit the idea of Father by adding "which is in heaven." Certainly He never recognized Joseph as His father. The reference is to His Father, God. He was born on His earthly side of the "seed of woman" (Gen. 3:15).

Mark, who writes to the practical Romans, simply shows that *doing the will of God* signifies true kinship with Christ. The Romans care little for anything prophetical or theological in any sense. They are satisfied with just plain *God*.

Luke, who thinks of the message of salvation through *Christ* as it affects the whole wide world and hence appreciates the need of evangelism that every ear might hear, says, "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it." "Faith cometh by hearing." Doing presupposes hearing, but Luke thinks of this and so expresses it. He sees the possibility of a brotherhood of faith and obedience.

§ 57. The Parables by the Sea. Mat. 13: 1-53; Mark 4: 1-34; Luke 8: 4-18.

Preliminary Remarks on Parables

Parables were occasioned by unreceptiveness on the part of hearers. They were common among Jewish teachers. They are the outlined shadows—large, perhaps, and dim—as the light of heavenly things falls on well-known scenes which correspond to and have their higher counterpart in spiritual realities. Earth and heaven are twin parts of His work.

A problem arises in Mat. 13: 10-16. On this Edersheim says: "On the other hand, in answer to the disciples, the Lord specially marks this as the difference between the teaching vouchsafed to them and the parables spoken to the people, that the designed effect of the latter was *judicial:* to complete that hardening which in its commencement had been caused by their voluntary rejection of what they had heard . . . Ground of different effect on unbelieving multitude and believing disciples was subjective and not objective; i. e., their attitude toward the kingdom of God rather than the form or substance of the parables." Jesus

had spoken in clear unequivocal language, but unbelief had stopped their ears, hence their rejection.

One could not be believing that Jesus tried to conceal truth by parables, which truth, if accepted, would have saved. But His parables had the effect of concealing truth.

Jesus is calling for decision. Parables provoke decision.

Rev. George Soltau in his "Four Portraits of the Lord Jesus Christ" states that since Jesus had been officially rejected by the Jewish Sanhedrin, He taught in parables not to *conceal* the truth, but to so partially *veil* it that only inquirers would be able to understand. So he explains Mat. 13 : 14, quoting Isa. 6. Soltau points out that Jesus eagerly explained to the interested and that today it is so. "To the multitudes now the Lord's words are as hidden as in His own time."

Etymologically the word *parable* is from the Greek *parabole,* meaning to place one thing by the side of another. Christ used them for the foundation of His teaching. Scenes familiar to everyday life were used to convey the message of the Master Teacher because these scenes were typical or symbolical of some phase of Kingdom Truth.

Of these parables spoken by the sea, four—The Sower, The Tares, The Mustard Seed, and The Leaven—were spoken to the people and the disciples; while three—The Hid Treasure, The Pearl, and The Net—were spoken to the disciples alone.

There were in all these parables not only the "photographic" but also the "prophetic." In the latter respect they differed from the parables used by Jewish teachers. In the parables Jesus took a picture of Kingdom Truth and facts and painted it in colors that should have made it clear to His hearers had they had eyes to see. The scenes and situations spoken of were familiar to all, but the meaning back of the word pictures were not clear to them. The Kingdom was a *mystery,* and the familiar figures and forms used to portray it were likewise mysterious so far as reading any sensible meaning into them was concerned. The poor prejudiced people could read no suitable meaning in what Jesus said; they could not interpret or "perceive."

Consider:

1. The Parable of the Sower.

A. Christ is here pictured as a *Sower* (cf. 13:3 and 13:37). Says Soltau, "No one will look twice at such a familiar and ordinary man." Surely Matthew here pictures Him as the rejected King; yet, if we glance at Mark's account, we cannot but recall what Edersheim relates that sowing was frequently done by beasts of burden. True to Mark's conception, we see the Master as a faithful ox, with a large perforated sack filled with corn, going forth that the seed may scatter. This figure will help us to understand how some seed would fall on the beaten path; some among the rocks; some among the thorns; and yet some on good ground. The ox went, and the seed fell. He carried the precious seed, and it fell wherever he should chance to go. So the teaching of the Kingdom fell on all kinds of hearts. From Luke's viewpoint we shall be interested to see the *generosity* of Christ as a sower; seed was not spared.

The Jewish idea of the Messianic Kingdom was one of outward display. Hence the suggestiveness of the parables was lost.

B. *The Nature of the Soil.* It was of four kinds: "wayside" soil; i. e., a hard beaten path; "stony places" or soil covering edges of rock; soil growing thorns, and "good ground."

From the explanation of Christ given in Mat. 13:18-23, Mark 4:13-20, Luke 8:11-15, it is quite clear that there are in general four different classes of hearers.

(a) Those that simply hear but do not heed. These are of the general nature as is described and exhorted in Heb. 2:1, 2 (R. V.). Satan can easily gainsay what falls on a hard heart. Mark notes that straightway cometh Satan "as a hungry bird and snatcheth away the seed," and Luke, thinking of Gentile ignorance and need, adds "that they may not believe and be saved." These are the preoccupied, unreceptive souls, and so calloused and seared that they are as unimpressionable to truth as an adamant is to moisture or seed. The seed would never bury itself. The resistance of the wayside is greater than the weight of the seed. Seed on such soil is wasted.

(b) Those that seem to be prepared to receive the message of truth but are really too shallow. The rocks and ledges are too near the surface. The intellectual or the sentimental is appealed to, and there seems to be a hearty response; but when the roots try to grow down deep into the heart of hearts, they meet with resistance. Something impenetrable is there. The individual says to Christ, "Thus far and no farther." A passing interest or fancy has admitted the Heavenly Guest into the reception hall, but another really more desirable is occupying the guest chamber. So the unappreciated One must leave. The seed could not bring forth fruit to maturity when the tap root is hindered in its growth. Being only on the surface, the plant is easily dislodged by the wind of tribulation, or washed out by the water of strife, or withered by the heat of persecution. This accounts for the stumbling and falling of many so-called converts. They are too tall for their weight. They are top heavy. The weighty, meaty message of full salvation has never filled their hearts. What a description of this class as well as a warning to it is found in Heb. 6: 1-9. They lack a sure "foundation" which, to change the figure, is to a building what a tap root is to a plant. They engage themselves with "doctrines" rather than life. They have been "enlightened" and have "tasted" and so experienced the Holy Spirit, at least in conviction, and have taken in some of God's Word, and even have sampled Canaan's fruit or smelt the brimstone of Hades, yet they reject the fullness of Christ and so make void His crucifixion for themselves. How are they unlike "the earth which drinketh in the rain."

(c) Those that receive the Word, but are too much engrossed with other things to give it room. They will not weed out. They are either dilatory or enjoy the weeds. Cares they carry rather than cast them upon Christ. Riches they rely upon for what they promise. The lusts of other things they indulge for their fleshly gratification. When the heart is filled with worry, fret, and care, with houses, lands, bank accounts and other commodities, with sensations from incontinence, there is not enough room for Christ. As upon His birth, if the inn is full with what seem to be important guests, He must go to an empty place even though it be a

manger. Thorny soil chokes out the wheat. It cannot mature.

(d) Those that give the Word a proper reception. Matthew says they *"hear* and *understand";* Mark, *"hear* and *accept";* Luke, *"Hear the word* in an *honest* and *good heart."* They are unlike the "wayside" soil which never accepts or receives; unlike the "stony ground" soil which never understands because it lacks depth; and unlike the "thorny" soil which never can be really honest and good so long as it harbors inimical influences.

But even in this soil not all seed brings in a maximum return. Of course, it is the soil that is to blame, not the seed. Here we with sadness realize our meager fruitage and blame only ourselves or simply note the condition without blaming God, but press on with the urge, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." Thankful are we for the little minimum return of fruit, lest the Master curse us as He did the leafy fig tree. The blessed man bringeth forth his fruit in his season as well as is consistently adorned with unwithered leaves (Psalm 1).

So we ask God to prepare our hearts for the seed of His truth lest we be "hard hearted" "wayside" hearers as were the antediluvians, the Sodomites, Pharaoh, and Chorazin and Bethsaida of later time; lest we be *shallow* with unbelief as were the ten spies who "saw but never experienced;" lest we be worldly as was Demas who finally left Paul; but rather that we may become *"open, true* and *good"* for His message.

The record of Mark 4:21-25 and Luke 8:16-18 seems to be to the same end as Mat. 13:13-17 amplifies. It impresses the responsibility for light.

> "Light received increaseth light;
> Light rejected bringeth night.
> Who can give me power to choose
> If the love of light I lose?"

Hence, "Take heed *what* ye hear" as well as *"how* ye hear."

2. The Parable of the Tares—Mat. 13:24-30.

Jukes notes that the parable of the *Tares* is found in Matthew rather than Mark. Says he, "The reason is plain.

The parable of the Tares gives our Lord the place of power. Such words as these, 'In the time of harvest, I will say to the reaper, Gather first the tares and bind them into bundles, and burn them,' though exactly suited to the Lord of the kingdom, are for that very reason out of character here, and as such are not recorded."

"Tares" suggest the element of *mixture* so characteristic of our age.

We notice that when the tares were observed, it was the "over officious" *servants* who were eager to "gather up" the undesirable tares, but the *"Sir"* foresaw that while this was being done, they would "root up the wheat also." So the wisdom of Him that sowed the good seed held in check the "inconsiderate zeal" of the servants. Servants are apt to be so bent on getting the smile of approval from their master that they disregard real values to do this. So henchmen, caddies, lackeys are so often despicable simply because in their loyalty to him who feeds them they disregard truth, honor, or right.

Of course the "tares" provoked both the owner of the field and his servants. They told of the work of an enemy who "while they slept . . . over sowed" what had already been sowed. (For the Greek original tells the story in the word translated *sowed* in the King James. The implication is that the enemy sowed his seed *over* or *on top of* and hence *after* the real sower had sown his.) Thus Satan gets in his work. He is a usurper. He works hardest where Jesus' work has been most successful.

Edersheim gives various possibilities as to what the "tares" may have been. A glance at these will be instructive.

(a) Bearded Darnel, a poisonous rye grass, very common in the East, *entirely like wheat until the ear appears.* This would answer to verse 26 of our narrative. "But when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." Just so in a spiritual way there are those who appear to be real Christians until it comes to fruit bearing. Their lives seem to be Christian, but where is the grain? The analogy is too severe to be pressed. Its contemplation might cause an unwholesome self-examination or actual but

needless pain to supersensitive souls. Suffice it to say that no Christian would be aught else but ashamed to go into the presence of his Lord "empty-handed." This suggests to us the story of the young man who, after being saved for 30 days, was on his death bed when he was asked if he were afraid to die. He replied, "No, but must I go and empty-handed?" C. C. Luther took up the plaintive interrogation, so full of a sense of shame and expressive of genuine self-depreciation, and wrote the following stanzas, to which George C. Stebbins wrote the music.

"Must I go and empty-handed,
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give Him?
Lay no trophy at His feet?

"Not at death I shrink and falter,
For my Saviour saves me now;
But to meet Him empty-handed,
Tho't of that now clouds my brow.

"Oh, the years of sinning wasted!
Could I but recall them now,
I would give them to my Saviour;
To His will I'd gladly bow.

"O ye saints, arouse, be earnest!
Up and work while yet 'tis day;
Ere the night of death o'ertake thee,
Strive for souls while still ye may.

Chorus:

"Must I go and empty-handed?
Must I meet my Saviour so?
Not one soul with which to greet Him;
Must I empty-handed go?"

We rather contemplate the experience expressed in the grand old missionary hymn:

"The tears of the sower and the songs of the reaper
Shall mingle together in joy bye and bye."

Whether we sow or reap, just so we have a share in the fruitage will satisfy us.

(b) Creeping-wheat or Couch-grass, of which the roots creep under ground and become intertwined with those of the wheat. This possibility very vividly portrays to us how disastrous would have been an attempt on the part of the servants, whose zeal exceeded their knowledge, to separate

the wheat from the tares. Certain intimate relationships in life are suggested to us here. The one, of a marriage where one of the parties has embraced Christianity while the other has not done so, is illustrative on this point. In 1 Cor. 7:12, Paul says, "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband which believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him."

But contrary to the idea of a separation when their married life is ended, Paul suggests the possibility of the unsaved partner's becoming converted. "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

Peter also shows this as not simply a possibility, but a probability, a likelihood. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word, be won by the conversation of the wives," etc. (1 Pet. 3:1-6). Herein we note that to root up and carry out to destruction precludes the possibility of salvation and may greatly disturb much tender wheat which even leans against the tares.

Our Master tolerated and taught the fickle multitude, the antagonistic Pharisees, the traitorous Judas, though He could not convert them. He faced the fact of tares, human, flesh and blood "tares," and went patiently on. For, said He, "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil" (John 6:70). Satan had successfully "over-sowed" Judas.

Jesus by these parables taught His disciples who had come out of the Jewish mould of non-conformity and intolerance. He taught them a lesson in the genius of the kingdom. Wheat will be wheat; tares are tares. Let them alone when it is a guess as to identity. You might get tares and wheat mixed, and oh, the tragedy of rejecting one stalk of wheat. Better tolerate ten tares.

(c) "But the parable gains in meaning if we bear in mind that according to ancient Jewish (and indeed, modern Eastern) ideas, the "tares" were not of different seed, but only a *degenerate kind of wheat.*" Rabbinism has it that

the ground had been guilty of fornication before the flood, so that when wheat was sown, tares sprang up.

This view reminds us that so long as we are *in the world,* we may count on evil as a factor. Perfection is not possible here. The most beautiful face is marred by some slight blemish. The whitest page has some flaw. The most successful day has some cause for regret. Utopia is "nowhere." The Brook Farm, the Economites, the Zoarites, the Dowieites are idealists, dreamers, but are working contrary to the principle of this parable. Seclusion makes for snobbery. After we have "picked our company" we must yet be ready for an occasional tare if not a "terror," though not a *"holy* terror."

A failure to observe this principle of patient waiting until "Age-Completion" and "Angel-Reaping" sent Huss to the stake, caused France to drive out the Huguenots, and thus "tap her artery and let flow her life blood" and drove Roger Williams into the forest in the dead of winter. Let us have well defined convictions, but let us beware lest we pluck up wheat for tares. When in doubt, do nothing. The angels will act. "Be patient brethren!"

Then, if tares are degenerate wheat, let us *"not be high-minded, but fear."* For if God spared not the natural branches, "take heed lest he spare not thee." "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell severity, but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:20-22).

In the very company with Jesus and His true disciples was Judas, who, ere long, was to be manifest as a tare. Thus even among the very chosen ones there may be tares known not by their place or position in the field but by their fruits, yet these may not be altogether bad and so may cause some doubt. Hence the exhortation, "Let both grow together."

Edersheim points out how Church History shows actual attempts "to make the wheat unmixed while growing by gathering out the tares." Says he "All such have proved a failure because the field is the wide 'world' not a narrow sect." Let us then do only what He bids. He never ordered tare gathering.

3. The Mustard Seed.

Three features of this parable are to be noted.

1. The small seed.
2. The tree which comes from the little seed.
3. The birds that lodge in the branches of this tree.

So small was the mustard seed that the Rabbis used it to indicate the smallest thing, such as "a drop of blood" the least defilement, etc. From this grows what looks no longer like a large garden herb or shrub but "becomes" or rather appears like "a tree." St. Luke has it "a great tree" (A. V.); i. e., in comparison with the vegetables. This speaks of the *extensiveness* of the kingdom. Soltau stresses the fact that he believes the *apparently abnormal growth* is the point to be noted, and hence would refer to the *abnormal development* of a Christian system which is only so-called. Historically we think of Constantine's work when the state religion became Christian by the Emperor's encouragement, or of Charlemagne's conversion of the Germanic peoples, or the rule of Papal power.

Since this parable is not interpreted, we must tread softly; but it does seem to represent a situation in which the Church is potent and popular, and hence all men fly to its shelter even as the birds fly to a tree. On this Silver says, "But the Laodicean church at the approaching end of this age has its denominational branches bending under the weight of fowls that are foul in more than one particular. Close observers see the corrupt political fowl, the greedy financial fowl, the bloated whiskey fowl, the licentious society fowl, and many a gorgeous bird of fashion. They are not all doves and yet they lodge in the tree. Few become doves."

But who knows but that Jesus desired to teach that there will come a time when all kingdoms of the earth will be under His sway? Ps. 2.

4. The Leaven.

In this parable Edersheim sees the *intensiveness* of the kingdom. This view would cause us to look forward to a time when "all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest." But we premillenialists steer clear of this interpretation because our "post" friends use the parable to show

how the world is being gradually Christianized. It may, however, pre-view the millennial accomplishment.

However, it seems to coincide with Scripture to think of leaven as sin, "evil working subtilely."

The parable could not teach that all the world will be Christianized before Christ comes because this would violate the truth of the parable of the tares which evidently is that good and evil apparently will go on side by side until "the consummation of the age." (marg. R. V.—See Mat. 12:39).

Christian writers so generally use the expression "leaven" to signify the general diffusion of Christian doctrine that it is well for us to be able to know what they mean. The premillennial tocsin is so well sounded by Jesse Forest Silver that I shall quote from him. "If we say, however, that the Gospel leavens the world, what does this prove? Leaven operates as it proceeds, and the mass through which it has passed is then leavened. Take the city of Jerusalem as the center of the lump to be leavened. After 1900 years is Jerusalem leavened? Moshein tells us that the Gospel first penetrated into the immense empire of China about the year 637, and that there are unexceptionable proofs that the northern parts of China, even before this country, abounded with Christians. Alas, brethren, where are the remains of those churches now? Has that portion of China been leavened since the seventh century? The Nestorians who dwelt in Syria, Persia and India, preached to the fierce and barbarous nations who lived in the remotest borders and deserts of Asia with remarkable success. The parable of the leaven at every turn fails to prove what some have read between its lines. No spot on earth is now enjoying millennial glory . . . The devil, loose, finds access to every sanctuary. Mighty revivals are often followed by fearful apostasy. Millennial glory, world-wide in extent and a thousand years long in duration, will follow the Lord's return."—*The Lord's Return,* pp. 248, 9.

Soltau after discussing the two views as to the leaven parable concludes, "And therefore in St. Matthew's Gospel it seems right to make the mustard seed represent abnormal

growth never intended, and the leaven the symbol of the working of error in doctrine."

Let E. D. Burton and Shailer Mathews state the case for the postmillennial school. "This is one of the most instructive parables uttered by Jesus. 'Leaven,' yeast, the symbol, not of corruption but of transformation through contact. This may be evil (Gal. 5:9) or good, as here. 'Till all was leavened.' Like the parable of the mustard seed, this indicates the wonderful growth of the kingdom. So small as to be hidden in the world, it will yet transform all. The parable also indicates how the kingdom is to grow; viz., by transforming its surroundings. This implies, (a) a gradual process; (b) the operation of social forces rather than miraculous intervention during the period of the growth of the kingdom. In this parable Jesus has composed an entire philosophy of social regeneration. And He was producing the 'yeast' in the persons of His disciples, especially the Twelve."

Let us briefly criticize this. Why is this parable "one of the most instructive"? Clearly to them because they believe that in it "Jesus has composed an entire philosophy of social regeneration." But Jesus would not teach here a philosophy contrary to that of the "tares" in which good and evil are together until the reaping time. It is easy to show how leaven stands for evil. Just refer to Gal. 5:9. But why say "or good" and then "as here." This is like defining a horse by saying "A horse is a horse." No wonder the believers in "Social regeneration" overwork this parable. It misapplied, as we believe, is their sole ground for the theory. But what of the other parables? Surely in them is much ground for a belief in no entire "gradual" "operation of social forces" until the kingdom is here in its perfection.

5. Parable of The Hid Treasure.

Probably Scofield's interpretation of this parable is the best. (See Scofield Bible.) Jukes, however, suggests that this parable gives God's viewpoint as to the value of the Church. It is true that Christ left heaven for earth simply to "seek and to save that which was lost" (cf. Phil. 2:5-11 and Luke 19:10). This view would make the unredeemed

possible Church the "hid treasure," the world "the field," and Christ the "man."

6. The Parable of The Pearl—Mat. 13:45-46.

This parable shows us how the Church, even though in mystery (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:3-10; 5:32) is of such great value to our Lord. As the "merchant" of the parable "sold all that he had and bought" the pearl, so Christ temporarily "emptied Himself" to redeem the Church. So the Pearl is "of great price" because it cost so much. Then it is "of great price" because it satisfies the heart of Christ. He was willing to pay dearly for the Church because He saw it as a groom sees a bride in whom his soul delights.

We shall venture a few analogies between the Pearl and the Church to make the subject concrete and meaningful.

a. As the pearl is of a *peculiar luster,* satisfying the eye with its iridescent sheen, so the Church as Christ's bride is altogether lovely as it reflects His manifold grace and unspeakable glory. (S. S. 5:16.)

b. As a pearl is formed by the intrusion of a foreign substance between the mantel and the shell of the mollusk, where it is encysted by secretion from the mollusk, so we are "aliens" (Eph. 2:12) by birth, and hence "foreign" to Christ, by whose life we are made fit to become sharers of His glory. We simply recognize that we are parasitic, and hence our new share is all of grace.

c. As this foreign substance is first lodging between the mantel and the shell of the mollusk, it is a source of *irritation.* How this sinful world must have irritated the sensitive spirit of the Saviour. If Sodom's sin vexed Lot's soul (2 Pet. 2:7-8), how much more must the world's iniquity have harrowed the heart of the Son of God. Little wonder we read of the "woes" in Mat. 23 where also we hear Him bemoan Jerusalem's obstinacy. And from this selfsame world we were taken, carrying over much that should have been left in Egypt. But praise God, we have become identified with Christ. As the mollusk encases the particles of sand, so we have been covered with the Christ life; we have "put on Christ."

d. Now these pearls when most desirable are free from

speck or flaw. They are *translucent;* i. e., the light passes through them although one cannot see through them. So one of the most desirable qualities of the Church is to let the "light of life" through. Their subdued color speaks to us of that desirable modesty which is so comely and becoming when characteristic of a saint whose colorful personality must be mellowed and toned down that Christ may be magnified.

e. It is suggestive that shells of irregular shape and stunted growth, bearing excrescences and being honeycombed by boring parasites are most likely to yield pearls. Was not our Saviour "marred" as to His visage and form (Isa. 52:14) when He was doing His redemptive work? (Isa. 53:2). He went through the travail necessary to the birth of a new redeemed race.

f. Pearls are valued as objects of personal adornment. So the Church is prized by Christ as she adorns His teaching. The doctrine seems beautiful or ugly according as it is set off by sanctified lives. (Titus 2:10.) Let us garnish the Gospel platter.

g. Few shells yield *true pearls.* These come from the deep sea and not the shallow, unreliable river. So only from the ocean of God's love can real Christians be produced.

h. A pearl to be round and symmetrically developed must be *unattached,* must have *freedom* of *play.* Here we distinguish between the "mother of pearl," which is really the same substance as the pearl but which cannot move because of attachment. This reminds us of how many become entangled in the world and so lose in symmetry and value. Hence we distinguish between the visible and the invisible Church. The latter has "come out from among them" and is "separate." In it are the saints—separated ones. These are pearls of great price, or better, comprise one pearl, to think of our being a corporate unity—one body. Pearl—"Christ's estimate of the loveliness of grace in His redeemed children."

7. Parable of The Dragnet. Mat. 13:47.

On this parable Edersheim says "The closing parable of the Dragnet was not less needful. Assuredly it became

and would more and more become them to know that mere discipleship, mere inclusion in the Gospel net was not sufficient. That net let down into the sea of this world would include much which, when the net was at last drawn to shore, would prove worthless or even hurtful. To be a disciple, then, was not enough. Even here there would be separation. Not only the tares which the enemy designedly had sown into the midst of the wheat, but even much that the Gospel net, cast into the sea, had enclosed would, when brought to land, prove fit only to be cast away into the oven of the fire where there is the wailing and the gnashing of teeth.

Does not this parable set forth that the "Net" or the "visible Church" the organized Church, the sphere of profession, as it is dragged into and through the sea of the world, will enclose both "good;" i. e., satisfying fish, and "bad;" i. e., *worthless* fish? This word "bad" is used (meaning "worthless") in Mat. 7:17, 18, and Luke 6:43. Whatever may be the particular qualities of these "bad" fish, this much we know, they will be of no value to the fisherman. The angels will know what fish are to be discarded. They will select. But let us look into the possibilities of a net but beware lest we out-Origen Origen. These are simply suggestive ideas rather than exegetical in the strict sense.

What did the "Every Kind" include?

1. *Possibilities.*

a. Tortoise—"snapper" may have slipped into that sea for a bath and found himself in a net. Paul's warning, "Beware of dogs . . . Beware of the concision" is pertinent here. He was referring to "snappy, snarlish" men who would "cut out" those not to their fancy. Same as "Tare" pullers (Phil. 3:2). Doctrinal experts read folks out and off.

b. Crawfish—"Backer" suggests those who put their hand to the plow and look back and hence become unfit for the kingdom. Lot's wife looked back because of interests in Sodom.

c. Eel—"slippery." "Alexander the coppersmith hath done me much evil, of whom be thou ware also." Look out

for the fellows who "slide out" of things. They are so adroit that it is hard to catch them.

d. Crocodile—"Sleeper"—sleeps until time to go home to dinner. When he hears a baby cry or a pig squeal, he suddenly opens his eyes. A "Christian crocodile" is drowsy only when things that fail to interest him are involved, "stuffs himself" and lolls selfishly. "High time to awaken out of your sleep, for now is salvation nearer than when . . . first believed." Cf. Eph. 3:14 with 1 Cor. 11:30. Note "not discerning."

e. Water Frog—"Jumper." "Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world" (Col. 4:14).

The Church has always been burdened with a surfeit of "excess baggage." Simon Magus had been baptized (Acts 8). Constantine "paganized Christianity in his attempt to Christianize the pagans" wholesale. Charlemagne brought in "every kind" by compulsion. Witness the Papacy and even the Church of God at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:2).

These remind one of:

a. Lancelot—a sub-fish.

(a) Dwells in the sand in warm seas—"earthy."

(b) Has no backbone—cartilagenous, hence lacking in rectitude.
Tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind and wave of doctrine.

(c) No brain.
Such characters as Louis XV of France who would go to worship and shed great tears over his sins and then go back to his paramour.

(d) No eyes.
Paul prayed that the eyes of their understanding ought to be opened. Eph. 1:18.

(e) No scales—no protection or cause of beauty. Scales on fish answer same purpose as feathers on a bird, clothes on a man, typical of righteousness in Bible. Our righteousness is as filthy rags, etc.

(f) No heart—calloused.

b. Lamprey—a Parasite. Feeds on blood of other fishes, which it sucks after scraping a hole in the flesh. The parasitic Christian is satisfied to cling to and take from others than Jesus.

As only the disciples were with Christ when He finished these parables, He asked them if they understood these things. They said "Yea." Then He reminded them of their wealth and compared them to "a householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." That is, He told them that new things would be theirs from time to time. Their old experiences would be repeated, and new ones awaited them. Just so with us.

These parables were "dim shadowy outlines, growing larger in their tracings to the people; shadowy outlines growing brighter and clearer to all who were disciples . . . . even negative critics admit to have really formed part of Christ's own original teaching."

The marvel is, as Edersheim puts it, "Has not history in the strange unexpected fulfilling of that which no human ingenuity at the time could have forecast, and no pen describe with more minute accuracy of detail, proved Him to be more than a mere man—One sent from God—the Divine King of the Divine Kingdom, in all the vicissitudes which such a Divine Kingdom must experience when set up on earth?"

§ 58. The Stilling of the Tempest. Mat. 8: 18, 23-27; Mark 4: 35-41; Luke 8: 22-25.

The curious "multitudes" "to whom He had all that morning spoken in parables" (Edersheim) gathered about Him again. Evidently Jesus knew that further instruction to them was unnecessary for the very reason that His former efforts had been futile so far as conveying to them His message. So "when even was come, he saith unto his disciples, Let us go over unto the other side" (Mark 4: 35).

The Jews spoke of two evenings, "the first evening," or the time when the sun was declining in the heavens, and "the second evening" when the sun had actually set. From the fact that "other boats" accompanied "the boat" in which

Jesus travelled, Edersheim argues that the little flotilla must have sailed from the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, in "the first evening" or "afternoon." This would have enabled the party to cross the sea, a distance of not over six miles, long enough before dark to have enabled Jesus to cast the demons out that day.

Storms have occurred on lakes before and since this great tempest swept down upon the calm Sea of Galilee, but never did any other storm meet with such commanding resistance as this one met at the hands of Him who has power over wind and wave.

Wearied with a day of arduous teaching, and so able to sleep anywhere, Jesus slept in the stern of the boat. All was confusion on the boat. The company was in consternation, but Jesus slept. We cannot imagine the Son of God perturbed under any condition. Greater storms faced Him. His serenity here is but characteristic of Him and indicative of His tranquil, victorious spirit in the midst of the storms of this world.

Though Jesus slept, yet the sea raged. The verse, "And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves," reminds me of the second stanza of "The Last Hymn" by Marianne Farmingham.

"But they looked across the water,
And a storm was raging there;
A fierce spirit moved above them—
The wild spirit of the air.
And it lashed, and shook, and tore them,
Till they thundered, groaned, and boomed,
And alas for any vessel
In their yawning gulfs entombed."

Was the "Prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2) exerting his forces over wind and wave to destroy the Son of God? If so, he was doomed to disappointment, for "They came to him and awoke him." Their excitement directed His attention to the danger. These men realized how powerless they were in the face of "nature." All they could do to save themselves was to call upon Him who can control any storm-tossed sea. Man, taken unawares, cannot successfully cope with the forces of nature. Floods rush on carrying cities to death and destruction; volcanoes

entomb populations; the habitations of man are tossed by tornadoes and cyclones as butterflies are blown by a summer breeze. Helpless man calls on God. In times of great danger prayer operates as an instinct.

Observe how the Synoptics relate the incident. Matthew, who aims to depict Christ as the King of the Jews, notes that they call on Him to "save" them. He is their only *safety*. Moreover, they address Him as "Lord." This is a term of *respect* and *reverence*. As the Jews read Matthew's Gospel, they were impressed that even in the excitement of the disciples, there was a due regard for Christ's lordship over them.

Mark pictures them as awaking Him and saying, "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" He who *came not to be ministered unto but to minister* as a "servant of all" (Mk. 10:44, 45), surely could help them in their distress. And then it was hardly fitting that He should be "asleep on the cushion" while the others were battling with the storm, especially since He was a Servant, faithful and true.

Luke's panic-stricken appeal, "Master, Master, we perish," carries with it an appeal to one in authority (cf. 5:5). Since Luke pictured Jesus as "Son of man," *seeking and saving the lost* anywhere, it is appropriate that he should see the helpless group appealing to Him, who had "all authority."

Christ was so fearless, He naturally asked His terrified disciples, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" His rebuke to the wind and the sea produced "a great calm." So it ever has been, is, and will be:

> "Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea,
> Or demons, or men, or whatever it be,
> No water can swallow the ship where lies
> The Master of ocean, and earth, and skies.
> They all shall sweetly obey Thy will,
> 'Peace be still! Peace be still!'"

Then those who had feared marvelled at His matchless power, and those who had counted on His valuable assistance "feared exceedingly" in His presence, because "even the wind and the sea obey Him." Their great surprise at Christ's *power over nature* argues that they did not as yet

recognize His deity. As one has said, He wanted this to be a matter of *discovery* rather than *dogma.*

§ 59. The Gadarene Demoniacs. Mat. 8: 28-34; Mark 5: 1-20; Luke 8: 26-39.

The Parables showed Jesus' supernatural wisdom as a Teacher. The stilling of the tempest showed His *power over nature;* and this case of casting out demons evinced His *power over evil spirits.*

The Jews thought of "a spirit world at war with God." "God . . . is confronted by powers of evil, not scattered and desultory, but organized, ruled, and guided, well drilled, well led, and not unaware of God's designs. Again and again, through traitors in God's kingdom, they got wind of the plans of God and anticipated them, defeated them where they could, and fought a war of cunning and skill against God."—*T. R. Glover.*

For some today "the whole universe is full of demon powers, more real than we can imagine. In an Indian temple I have seen women undergoing the process of having devils driven out of them. I have seen men of education bowing in these temples to avert the anger of such spirits. To the stranger from the West, with his modern science, they are nothing. To the ancient world they are more real than men and women on the streets . . . The later Greek philosophers explained through demons the origin of evil, all the mystery and all the trouble of the world, and also the otherwise inexplicable gulf between the ultimate but unknowable One God and man; dæmons in the air, man on earth . . . The Jew and the Christian were monotheists, but they too believed in the existence of *dæmons;* they were face to face with this awful reality of the dæmon world at war with God. Paul, it is quite clear, shared that belief, though he did not give to it the importance that other men gave. Into that war, however, according to Paul, came a new force—the Son of God, the Lord of Glory. He battled with the powers of evil, and the battle went strangely, and they trapped Him. Pilate and Herod were mere tools in the hands of these dæmon powers, and they captured the Son of God (1 Cor. 2:8) . . . So far from defeating

God's purpose . . . they had only played into the hands of God. For the defeat of Christ on the Cross led to the Resurrection, to the triumph of God over dæmon powers, to captor made captive, death conquered, man set free," etc. —*Glover.*

Even though Satan and demons were glad to see Christ crucified, yet they could never have accomplished this had He not "given up the Ghost." He laid down His life voluntarily.

As the chapter on "Devil Possession" from "Is the Devil a Myth," by C. F. Wimberly, shows that Satan is *adaptable* and *changes his tactics,* to suit occasions we recommend it (pp. 118-123).

The fact that this demoniac and his less important companion approached Jesus as soon as He landed on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee indicates an interest. What could have been the reason for the approach of this demonized one to the Son of God? Possibly enough *individualism* was left in the man for him to draw near to Christ as a last resort to deliverance from the pack of demons infesting him. Surely his was a sad plight. He was unclad, unhoused and unsubmissive. He terrorized the community with his unsightly nude and lacerated appearance and his hellish shrieks. He could not be confined.

Coming into Jesus' presence, he "fell down before him" and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?" We observe that the demons recognized Jesus. They were sure He was "Son of the Most High God." On this point Edersheim says, "As always also, the demons knew Jesus, and His presence seemed to constrain their confession of themselves—and therefore of Him . . . In some measure it is the same still. The introduction of grace brings to light and experience sin hitherto unknown, and the new light brings consciousness of, and provokes contest with evil within, of which the very existence had previously been unsuspected. In the present instance the immediate effect was homage which presently manifested itself in language such as might have been expected . . . Self-confession of the demons . . . made the man fall down."

"What have I to do with thee?" signifies "What have we in common?"

The answer of the demoniac to Christ's question, "What is thy name?" "My name is Legion, for we are *many*" is expressive of *dual consciousness.*

Interesting it is that these demons wanted to stay in that country. Hence they entered the swine not by Jesus' arrangement. He did not actually hinder their entering the swine, but neither did he provide for it. He "gave leave." He said "Go." Hence He could not be held morally responsible for the loss of the hogs. The fact that the demons were in "choked" or "drowned" swine enabled them, of course, to stay in the country, if they chose, because the owners would hardly fish the extinct porkers from the lake.

The swine herders ran to their employers with the story. When these came, they saw the formerly demonized one "sitting clothed, and in his right mind." Then they feared. And instead of honoring Christ, they sent Him out of their coasts. *They preferred hogs to boys and men.* They could not tolerate one whose power was at least indirectly connected with the loss of their business. Business first; boys second. Even Christ must go if He hurt business. It was a case of *God* and *Mammon;* they chose Mammon.

But Jesus would not take the one dispossessed of the devils with Him. He left him there as a witness, as a "marvel."

§ 60. The Raising of Jairus' Daughter. Mat. 9: 1, 18-26; Mark 5: 21-43; Luke 8: 40-56.

The commercial spirit of the Gadarenes compelled Jesus to return to the west coast of the Sea of Galilee where a multitude met Him. The waiting crowd "welcomed Him." He was famous. The marvels associated with Him arrested the attention of all. Most of those comprising the multitude were simply curious, but in their midst was one, Jairus, a "ruler of the synagogue," who came to Christ very *humbly.* "He fell down at Jesus' feet." About this man there was an *urgency,* for he realized his little daughter was "at the point of death." Certainly this noted Rabbi saw in Jesus his only hope of health for his daughter.

The Master, ever ready to aid in a time of need, followed Jairus to help him. His disciples accompanied Him. As Jesus pushed His way through the curious crowd "a woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, came behind Him and touched the border of his garment." When she was healed, and Jesus recognized that virtue had gone out of Himself, He attributed her healing entirely to her faith. Note this faith that Christ commended:

a. It combated a disease of long standing—twelve years.
b. It was more potent than all attempts made by the woman to be cured previously. Mark says that she "had suffered many things of many physicians and had spent all that she had and was nothing better, but rather grew worse."

Dr. Vincent in commenting on the word "suffered" gives "the medical prescription for the treatment of such complaint given in the Talmud. I copy it. "Take of the gum of Alexandria the weight of a zuzee (a fractional silver coin); of alum the same; of crocus the same. Let them be bruised together and given in wine to the woman that has an issue of blood. If this does not benefit, take of Persian onions three togs (pints); boil them in wine, and give her to drink, and say 'Arise from thy flux.' If this does not cure her, set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her right hand, and let some one come behind and frighten her and say, 'Arise from thy flux.' But if that do not good, take a handful of cumin, a handful of crocus and a handful of fenugreek. Let these be boiled in wine and give them to her to drink, and say, 'Arise from thy flux.'" If these do no good, other doses, over ten in number, are prescribed, among them this: "Let them dig seven ditches, in which let them burn some cuttings of vines, not yet four years old. Let her take in her hand a cup of wine, and let them lead her away from this ditch, and make her sit down over that. And let them remove her from that and make her sit down over another, saying to her at each remove, 'Arise from thy flux.'"

Surely the above suggests what may be meant by "Had suffered many things."

c. It was her one resource. Her money was gone, so she came to Him who gives "without money and without price."
d. Her faith craved contact with Christ. Said she, "If I touch but His garments, I shall be made whole."
e. Then she "crowded" to Christ.
   (a) Pushing through the throng.
   (b) Struggling on in spite of her own weakness.
   (c) Suppressing any doubts that might arise.

If we observe this woman in these respects, she becomes to us an example. When we would "get to Christ" we realize "folks" may and usually do hinder; then we are handicapped by our very selves, what we have been. This business of approaching Christ is a new thing to us. Our own doubts will combat our faith.

f. Her faith operated effectively. "She felt in her body she was healed of her plague."
g. Hence hers was a commendable faith (Mk. 5:34). It is possible that this modest but believing woman would have slipped through the "jam" unobserved, had Jesus not "perceived" that "power from him had gone forth."

Power over Nature, expressing itself in the elements, He had. Casting out of the demons showed Him to have *Power over demons;* so this miracle of healing showed Him to have *Power over Disease.*

As the Master was commending the woman for her faith, certain ones rushed from the home of Jairus bidding him not to trouble the "Teacher" since his daughter was dead. But Jesus' message to the ruler of the synagogue was "Fear not, only believe." Then Jesus, in spite of the death dirges of the flute players, the tumult of the mourners, and the scornful jeers of the unbelievers, took with Him Peter, James, John and the father and mother of the girl and, going into the death-chamber, regarded death as but a sleep for said He to her, "Talitha cumi." Then at once the damsel arose and walked.

This case which seemed impossible to ignorant doubt was

easy for Christ, God's Son. This scene reveals to us our masterful Lord and Saviour. He "charged" them not to tell. He commanded them to give the damsel food. It was "right" that He should "rule." Difficult situations but gave Him opportunity to display His power.

Of the stilling the tempest one has written:

> "He never would have been the same on land
> As where winds died at His command."

Death's presence only provoked Christ's power.

§ 61. The Two Blind Men and the Dumb Demons. Mat. 9: 27-34.

The two blind men without encouragement followed Him, crying. Theirs was the eagerness. Just as the woman with the issue of blood and Jairus sought out Christ so these blind men pursued Him. Though Christ was a stone "set at nought by the builders," the religious leaders of His day, yet the common people pressed upon Him curiously and often, as here, entreatingly. These poor unfortunates feeling their way through life's darkness surely followed a heaven-born instinct when they followed "The light of the world." For He was and is and will be the real Light, the Sun of righteousness. The Church, as the moon, shines only with reflected light.

Their cry for "mercy" indicated their consciousness of their plight. They felt sure of the pity of Him who "weeps" at Lazarus' grave. His heart is ever touched with the infirmities of the race of men since He was man.

Their addressing Him as "Son of David" indicated their faith in His power. In response to their faith "touched he their eyes . . . and their eyes were opened."

The fact that these men disregarded or disobeyed His charge of silence and spread abroad His fame was only natural. How could men who had been blind, but who received their sight, keep quiet about it? Jesus' charge amounted to His not encouraging others to advertise Him. His was a modest though at times a popular ministry. As one has said He desired the fact that He was God in the flesh to be a matter of *discovery* rather than a matter of *dogma*.

Following the opening of the eyes of the two blind men a dumb demon was cast out of one brought to Jesus. The results of this miracle are interesting as seen in the man, the multitude and the ministers of religion.

(a) The man, erstwhile dumb, spake.
(b) The multitude marvelled, saying, "It was never so seen in Israel."
(c) The ministers of religion, the Pharisees, tried to explain the whole thing away by attributing Christ's power to cast out demons to the prince of demons.

The fact that one hitherto silent should speak arrested the attention of the multitudes, who magnified Christ's work above anything else in Israel's history. This comparison of Christ with the past suggested an invidious contrast and stirred the Pharisees to attempt to account for His power and to associate it with Satan.

The mind is so constructed that men "admit" or "reject." When they admit they take up with, when they reject they explain away.

§ 62. Second Rejection at Nazareth. Mat. 13: 54-58; Mark 6: 1-6; Luke 4: 16-30.

Certain alliterative words suggest themselves as I study the incidents in connection with Christ's second rejection in His boyhood city, Nazareth. These will provide the frame work or outline of our considerations here.

1. Our Lord's *faithfulness* at home. "He taught them in their synagogues." It is just a little easier to keep silent in one's own community. Both modesty and wisdom dictate the inadvisability of any show of pretentiousness at one's home. Yet our Lord, by examples, served upon us the notice that we must be faithful at home. One's Nazareth, the place where he was brought up, may be his Jerusalem, where he is to "begin." If we are just as sure of our message as Jesus was of His it will be less difficult to open the Book to our kinsfolk and acquaintances.

2. His *effectiveness.*

They were astonished and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works?" (Mat. 13 : 54).

Jesus succeeded in arresting their attention. They saw the facts of His life but they could not account for these. They did not get the meaning of the phenomena, yet they perceived there was some force back of Christ's words and works that they had not discovered. The long-distance view of Him simply aroused their curiosity. He was yet to be "discovered" to them.

3. The *futility* of His message.

"They were offended in Him." They stumbled over Him. To them He was "the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses, and Judas and Simon." With Him they were *familiar* and then as now "Familiarity breeds contempt." Had His words come from some one from a distance they would have not simply been heard but heeded. Measured by themselves His words and works were quite unusual, extraordinary, but the more they thought of their carpenter-neighbor the more convinced were they that He could not be the source of such a stream. Jesus of Nazareth, thought they, could be no fountain of weighty words and mighty deeds, so "they stumbled." And it was even as Paul wrote. He was "unto the Jews a stumbling-block" (1 Cor. 1 : 23).

4. The *philosophy* of Christ.

As if to rescue them from their own provincial, narrow bigotry and near-sighted jealousy, as well as to reconcile His own heart, our Lord and Master, with appropriate perspective, picked up a great truth and held it before their myopic eyes when He from His eminence of magnanimity uttered "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house."

This fact was comfort to Him. It should have been startling to them. In the same breath that He explained and from one point of view excused their rejection of Himself, He also accused them of a failure to recognize their

prophet. History was repeating itself. Another prophet was being received "abroad" but rejected at home. But this Prophet is great enough to turn the searchlight of history onto the page of their own problem and make them responsible for their conduct. Was Moses rejected by Egypt, Elijah by Israel, Jeremiah by Jerusalem and Socrates by Greece? Yes, each was despised by the people of whom he was the benefactor. But if the Nazarenes had not been so provincial they would have read the tragedies of the peoples who rejected their prophets. But alas and alack, history again repeats itself and Nazareth that should have known of Christ's unique character refused to allow Him as a sufficient cause for what they saw transpire as if through Him. They argued and deceived their own hearts. Prejudiced intellect assumed the prerogative of final judge and condemned Christ as a fabricator or an impostor.

5. The *Fewness* of His Works. Mat. 13:58; Mk. 6:5.

The hands of Christ were tied by unbelief. One would naturally think that in Nazareth, His home, faith in Him would have been abundant. But evidently Nazareth, as Edersheim says, proudly claimed Him as her son when reports of His power came to her but then she did not recognize His deity and so misinterpreted Him. Had she accepted Him as divine then His whole life would have been intelligible. Drummond in his "Faith's Perplexities," has a chapter on the "Credulity of Unbelief." His point is that the unbelievers ridicule the credulity of Christian believers. Yet these same unbelievers are gullible so that they accept what is really untenable. In referring to the tendency of unbelief to "laugh out of court" all not suited to its fancy he says that Beethoven's stringed quartette would be said to scrape horses' tails over cats' bowels. Luke 4:23-27 elaborates on the fact that the fewness of Christ's works was attributable to Nazareth's irresponsiveness.

6. The *Fury* of Antagonism. Luke 4:28.

They would have dashed Him over the precipice had He not eluded them.

§ 63. Third Preaching Tour Continued. Mat. 9:35; Mark 6:6b.

Though spurned in His own village yet He went to other villages teaching and healing.

§ 64. The Mission of the Twelve. Mat. 9:36-11:1; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6.

By "mission" here I mean *"delegation"* or *"sent ones."*

1. The Need of the Mission — Multitudes shepherdless (Mat. 9:26).
2. The effective cause of the Mission.
   a. Christ's compassion (9:36).
   b. Prayer (9:38).
3. The Mission.
   a. Its personnel (16:2-4). *"The twelve."*
   b. Its Power (10:1). Not simply "dynamic" but "authority." They had not so much "ability" as God-given "right" to execute.
   c. Its Program.
      (a) Negatively stated (Mat. 10:5b). Matthew interested in declaring Christ's Kingdom and announcing Him as King of the Jews alone relates this point.
      (b) Positively stated.
         (1) Proclamation (Mat. 10:7). They were to "preach."
         (2) Purgation (Mat. 10:8). "Cleansing," "healing" and "casting out" was to be their work.
         (3) Preparation (Mat. 10:9, 10). Equipment or "outfit" was very limited.
         (4) Particularizing (10:11-15). These messengers were to be impartial, yet they were to select the responsive and reject the irresponsive.

Peter
Andrew
James
John
Philip
Bartholomew
Thomas
Matthew
James (of Alphaeus)
Thadaeus
Simon
Judas Iscariot

d. Its Perils (Mat. 10:16-23). "Sheep" are in danger when "wolves" are about. But these were *"wolves"* of a higher type; they were "men."

e. Its Protector (Mat. 10:29 and context). He that notes the fall of a sparrow will surely care for His own.

f. Its Partitioning message (10:34-39). Those not for Christ and open for His message are against Him.

g. Its Preciousness (10:40). The apostles were in Christ's stead. Hence their reception meant that He was received. It behooved men to properly value the Gospel messenger. So it is ever as Paul quoted from Isaiah, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15b).

§ 65. Death of John the Baptist. Mat. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 9:7-9.

Introduction: Note the question of fasting (Mat. 9:14-17). Christ's presence marked the "wedding-week" during which time "children of the bride-chamber" were exempt from fasting. Christ's going away from them would necessitate fasting. Verses 16 and 17 indicate the irrelevancy of fasting, the incongruity of putting Christ's new patch on the old threadbare *garment* of Pharisaism. "Christ is not merely a reformation; all things must become new." New wine of the kingdom would break old forms.

Note John's question sent from prison (Mat. 11:2-14). Imagine doubts in such a one as John had been. Says Edersheim, "Not Paul, when forsaken of all, he lay in the dungeon, the aged prisoner of Christ; not Huss, when alone at Constance he encountered the whole Catholic Council and the flames; only He, the God-man, over whose soul crept the death coldness of great agony, when, one by one, all light of God and man seemed to fade out, and only that one remained burning — His own faith in the Father — could have experienced bitterness like this." The fact of this record proves the narrative was no invention—"Evidential force of this narrative seems irresistible." Does our doubt

lead us to Christ? Why ask a false Christ? Faith must have preceded the question.

Jesus points out His works (v. 5). Then He eulogizes John (W. 7, 8, 11), who had fallen victim to Herod's wrath for prophesying against his marriage.

Herod's Feast

At Herod's feast, after all guests were satiated with food, then a "sensuous stimulus" in the form of a "dubious dance" was introduced. The daughter of the degenerate Herodias, "wretched offspring of the once noble Maccabees," did the dance. The king, pleased by it, gave her the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Herodias had been married to her half uncle, Herod Philip, son of Herod the Great. When Herod Philip, through his father's will, was deprived of the throne, his ambitious wife willingly conspired with her husband's half brother, Herod Antipas, to become his wife. Herod Antipas repudiated his wife and married Herodias. Herodias was "the curse and ruin" of Antipas.

The murder of John the Baptist horrified the people. Herod was worsted in a war with Aretas, father of his former wife. Incited by his wife, he went to Rome to be made a king, but was instead banished to Gaul. But Herodias was faithful to Herod Antipas, though given favors by the Emperor. As for Salome, she was married to her uncle, Philip the Tetrach. Legend says her death was retributive; i. e., it was the result of a fall on the ice.

With reverential silence we contemplate why God permitted John to first languish in prison and then come to such an untimely death at the hands of a Jezebel, but we know Jehovah reigneth.

§ 66. The Feeding of the Five Thousand. Mat. 14: 13-23; Mark 6: 30-46; Luke 9: 10-17; John 16: 1-15.

Christ leaves Capernaum because

1. Danger of uprising after John's death.
2. To temporarily withdraw from the power of Herod.
3. Need of rest. (Mk. 6: 31.)

Christ arrives at Bethsaida on the east shore. *Multitudes follow.* (Mk. 6:33; Luke 9:10.) They were:

Religious—"Passover Pilgrims."—Edersheim.
Christ's "compassion" for multitude.
Leaderless—"As sheep not having a shepherd." (Mk. 6:34).
He taught them. Mk. 6:34b.
He would feed them. Mk. 6:35-37.
His disciples saw the impossibility of this amount.
Hungry—Always a problem to "feed spiritually."
Christ's plan—Sit down—"order." Mk. 6:39; Jno. 6:10.
Christ's provision—5 loaves, 2 fishes.
Christ's prayer and posture—"looking up to heaven" "gave thanks." Mk. 6:41; John 6:5.
Christ's plenty—"All did eat and were filled." Mk. 6:42.—*Fragments.*

§ 67. Jesus Walking on the Water. Mat. 14:24-36; Mark 6:47-56; Jno. 6:16-21.

After Jesus had fed the "5,000 men" the people, because of "the sign which he did" pronounced Him "the prophet that cometh into the world." Then Jesus realized that they were about to take Him by force and make Him king (Jno. 6:14, 15). This led Him to *constrain* the disciples to take a boat over the Sea of Galilee. Probably He knew it was wise to have the disciples leave the scene of His popularity. Then He sent the multitude away, a full crowd so far as their stomachs were concerned, yet a disappointed lot because He would not yield to their entreaties to be king.

Then He goes to the mountain to pray. What a prayer that must have been! We imagine He prayed for the fickle multitude, for the disciples, for grace to stand popularity as well as persecution. For Jesus just could not afford to be influenced by popular sentiment. He must be the same ever. Christ on the mountain alone in prayer could see the

distress of the boat in which His faithful followers were rowing against a contrary wind. The friendly full moon of Passover season disclosed the sea to Him even at night. That boat was His charge; in it were those who were to comprise His Church. He would not rest while they were in danger, so, though it were 3 a. m., He went down to their relief instead of resting, for their oars were powerless against the storm, just as our mightiest efforts are too feeble to overcome difficulties that block our progress. He alone can help us out of our troubles.

But when He neared them, they were affrighted. They took Him for a "ghost." Evidently they were not prepared for a miracle. But He quiets their fears with a reassuring word, "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid."

He at that time would not be recognized as a "king" yet He assured them that in a higher sense, in another sphere, He was verily King. Well was it that the disciples learned all these lessons, which they doubtless treasured and later used.

But Peter, spurred on by an impulsive hope,—or a presumptuous faith—asked Jesus to bid him go to Him on the water if He were the Lord. Jesus, apparently desiring to meet Peter's faith, such as he had, transformed that presumption into real faith and bade Peter "Come." But Peter saw the work of the wind and began to sink until Jesus took his hand and with a mild rebuke gave him a sure footing and a safe place in the boat. So Jesus though He rebukes, yet He assists. Our feeble efforts merit His rebuke, yet He ever is ready to save us. We need not fear of perishing, however futile is our effort, so long as we sincerely press to Him.

The next day finds Jesus as busy as ever in His ministry of healing. But here we should not fail to notice that those in the boat worshipped Him when He saved them, drew the sinking Peter out of the water, and, no less marvel, had walked on the water Himself. Christ surely does seem more worthy of worship and praise when He has benefited us; yet He is ever the same and always is deserving of our truest devotion.

§ 68. Discourse on the Bread of Life. John 6: 22-71.

The multitude fed by Christ on the east side of the Sea of Galilee followed Him to the west side to Capernaum. They, not knowing of His night trip on the water, were eager to know when He had come hither. Jesus frankly told them that their chief interest was in the "loaves." Then He gave them a discourse on "the meat, which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." But their craving for the "loaves" led them to suggest to Him that He provide them with a "sign" similar to the one Moses furnished in the wilderness when daily food in the form of manna was provided. But Jesus kept calling their attention to "the true bread out of heaven." When they called for that bread, He responded with "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

In spite of the murmuring of the Jews against His contention that He came down from heaven (Jno. 6:41—) Jesus kept insisting, "I am the bread of life." They saw Him as Joseph's son in spite of His miraculous power, but Jesus insisted that they must eat of His flesh and drink of His blood to have eternal life. He stated that partaking of Him was necessary to communion (Jno. 6:56). Evidently Jesus, when He referred to eating His flesh and drinking His blood, had in mind that the believer must by faith appropriate the work of Calvary where His body was mutilated and His blood shed. Then when we partake of the loaf and the wine of communion, we "show forth the Lord's death till he come." When Paul instructed the Corinthians as to communion, he said that "some were weak and sickly" in their midst, and some "slept" because they failed to "discern the Lord's body."

Calvary's work matters. Christ's death not only opened a way to God for man, but made possible that blessed companionship or fellowship of which John writes (1 Jno. 1:3).

Even the disciples stumbled at Jesus' words concerning His flesh being the Bread of which the believer must partake. Then He told them that "It is the spirit that quick-

eneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Many disciples left Him, but the twelve remained with Him. The Master's question, "Would ye also go away?" provoked Peter's frank "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Peter assured Christ that the twelve believed and knew that Jesus was "the Holy One of God." But Jesus, knowing better than Peter, declared, "Did not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Ah, the *sifting was on.* The multitude followed for the loaves and fishes; the outer circle of disciples left Him when they could not understand Him; Judas was due to betray Him. We shall with interest follow the eleven as Christ comes up to and passes through the Passion Week.

Need I ask these questions? Has our religion or Christianity a physical basis only; i. e., do we care more for Christ's blessing than for Christ Himself? Or do we go with Him only as far as we can understand Him as do modernists? Or do we, like Peter, cleave to Him as the Only One who has *eternal-life words?*

§ 69. Discourse On Eating With Unwashen Hands. Mat. 15: 1-20; Mark 7: 1-23.

These Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem raised the question of Jewish traditionalism, citing as an instance of infraction the fact that Jesus' disciples ate with unwashen hands. On this point "the tradition of the elders" was very strict. The Pharisees charged Jesus with "not being of God" and being "a sinner." So eager were they to make good their charge that they grabbed at any straw of supposed evidence against Him. Hence they blamed Jesus for allowing His disciples to eat with "unwashen" or "common hands."

To observe washings had, as some held, scriptural support. See Lev. 15: 11. Its observance had exceptions. But that it must be done was strongly urged by the Mishna. Defiled hands might render the whole body unclean. Consider one curious application of the idea of the defilement of hands. "The roll of the Pentateuch in the temple defiled all kinds of meat that touched it," according to a decree. This was based on the fact that the Terumah (preserved

first-fruits) kept close to the Roll of the Law caused the latter to be injured by mice. The Rabbinic ordinance was intended to avert this danger and so preserve the Roll. (Note: Really the fruit caused the destruction of the Roll, yet knowing the force of the religious decree, the Roll was said to defile the fruit or meat.) To increase the precaution, it was decreed that all that rendered the Terumah unfit also defiles the hands. Hence the Holy Scriptures defile not only the food but the hands that touched them, and Holy Scriptures included all inspired writings, Law, Prophets and Hagiograph. . . . . Even smallest portion of Scripture would "defile the hands." Consider then that the disciples had been neglecting a rite considered very important by the scribes.

Later the Pharisees evaded this rite, however, by inventing what we would term the Popish principle of intention; i. e., if any one had performed the handwashing in the morning "with intention" it would apply to the whole day!

But a special decree had gone out just before Christ which was carried into force in the very days of Christ. Hence the zeal of the scribes. (A new "rule." "Prohibition" is just in force.) Orthodox Jews had many other observances which they had "received to hold;" e. g., any contact with a heathen, even to touch his dress, made it necessary for the Jew to immerse himself. Vessels having contracted impurity were to be broken if earthen; immersed, if wood, horn, glass, or brass, etc.

We see herein Christ's attitude toward *traditionalism* in that He neither vindicated their conduct nor apologized for their breach of Rabbinic ordinances. When the scribes charged them, He was *indifferent.* This was quite noticeable when we learn that *ordinances of the scribes were declared more precious and of more binding importance than Holy Scripture itself.*

Edersheim calls our attention as to why Christ provoked such hostility by opposing what might have seemed indifferent by showing us to what extremes Rabbinism went. It declared that God during the day studied the Scripture and at night the Mishnah. Anthropomorphism was carried to profanity. God is pictured as spending the last three

hours of each day playing with the Leviathan. Since Jerusalem was destroyed, He no longer laughs but weeps (Jer. 13:17). Jer. 25:30 is said to mean that because of the destruction of the temple, God roars like a lion in each of three night watches.

When Christ declared that they rejected God's commandment for tradition, He became pronouncedly antagonistic to traditionalism. This "hurt" because no traditional law was supposed to contradict the Scriptures. The "Ten Words," or Commandments of the Decalogue, were "the Holy of Holies of the Law." Honor to parents was an obligation most rigidly enforced. But Jesus cites an instance where a *vow* according to Rabbinism, may offset, and in practice did really offset, this commandment.

The Mishna Tractate tells what expressions were equivalent to vows and what would either legally "invalidate or annul a vow, or leave it binding." Many foolish vows were made and kept. Express words of vowing were not needed. Korban, "given to God," or Qonam, "let it be established," would suffice. If a thing laid on the altar were mentioned, that was a vow. In the second use of the word Korban, it meant "appropriated to self when another's," as was the case here. The Mishnah discussed whether "honour of father and mother," constituted a ground for invalidating a vow, in regards to parents, and decided "no" with *one* dissenting voice.

PART VI

Third Period of the Galilean Ministry

§ 70. Syrophoenician Woman's Daughter. (Mat. 15: 21-28, Mark 7: 24-30.)

Note that this woman, not an Israelite, fittingly, in lowliest reverence, addressed Christ as "O Lord, Thou Son of David." She used a Jewish name on Him. She thought of Him as "an Israelitish Messiah." He refused her at first so that it might be clear that His works were not a mere demonstration of power. He did not mean to reject her, but only to refuse her as being "Lord, Son of David." He healed her daughter as her "Lord." She was one of the "little dogs under the table," but since she was a little dog under her Master's table, hers was the same, in kind, as that of the children, the Jews, though they sat around the table at whose head was the Master, or Lord. (Christ showed that He was *first* for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles, and what the former received, the latter also received, even though it be crumbs dropped from Jewish hands, as, for example, the Scriptures, Christ, etc.)

Failure to heal her daughter at once was hardly that He might first try her faith or that His healing of her was an "after-thought." He had something to teach her. She saw it in Christ's countenance, and said it. He was her Master and she had a right to "crumbs" from Him who was Lord of Jews and Gentiles.

She was a daughter of Abraham, being of "faith."

§ 71. Return Through Decapolis; Many Miracles of Healing. (Mat. 15: 29-31; Mark 7: 31-37.)

Following the healing of many, they bring unto Him one deaf and having an impediment in his speech. Note the "means" used in Mark 7 : 33 by Christ.

Edersheim says, "This elaborate use of means would banish the idea of magic." Of course this means all eman-

ated from the Person of Christ. It was His power ultimately.

§ 72. The Feeding of the Four Thousand. (Mat. 15: 32-38; Mark 8: 1-9.)

There is nothing new in this miracle when it is compared with that of "Feeding of the Five Thousand," except that we observe that Jesus had a peculiar compassion on the multitude, lest they should "faint in the way," as they were homeward bound.

§ 73. The Pharisees and Sadducees Demanding a Sign From Heaven. (Mat. 15: 39—16: 12; Mark 8: 10-21.)

In answer to the demand for a *sign,* Jesus told them that no sign should be given them but that of the prophet Jonah. Now what could have been "the sign of Jonah," if not *the clear prophetic ring?* Jonah spake with authority and Ninevah repented. The Pharisees and Sadducees were supposed to be religious "specialists" yet they better "knew how to discern the face of the heaven" than "the signs of the times." They could write the weather "Probs," (as Canadians say,) but could not prognosticate spiritually. They perceived probable weather conditions, but they were obtuse as to spiritual realities.

Their *major* had been supplanted by things of time and sense. They were religious "quacks" and so could not discern the value of Jesus' message from His clear prophetic ring. Jesus had no "signs" for such as they.

Following this incident, Jesus warned His disciples to "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They supposed that He referred to their failure to take bread. The fact that they so felt is indicative that they realized that they had been remiss along this line. Possibly they saw that they were like the Pharisees and Sadducees, also coming to depend upon the signs. But Jesus warned them rather of the *teaching* of these Pharisees and Sadducees. That of the Pharisees was Externalism in matters of religion, and that of the Sadducees was Materialism.

Pharisees were careful to *tithe* "mint, anise, and cumin," garden vegetables, but they neglected "judgment, mercy, and faith." They magnified the minor matters and minified, or rather, entirely neglected the major matters. And this they did because they were alive only to the external, in which realm lay the minor. They were misfits in things spiritual. They were color blind in the spiritual realm.

The Sadducees believed in no spirits nor any resurrection and so were Materialists. Jesus did not desire His disciples to be infected with their crass teaching.

§ 74. The Blind Man Near Bethsaida. (Mark 8: 22-26.)

Following the Master's contact with the unbelief of the Pharisees and Sadducees and His expressed solicitations for the spiritual welfare of His disciples, lest they should become contaminated with the doubt of these two classes, we meet the case of this "blind man." Though blind in so far as his natural eyes were concerned, yet he had sufficient sight with his spiritual eyes to place himself at the disposal of Jesus, who, by stages, brought him to clearness of vision. Surely evidences of faith must have rejoiced Jesus' heart.

"The use of saliva was a well-known remedy for affections of the eyes." It was thus that *Rabbi Meir* relieved one of his fair hearers when her husband, in his anger at her long detention by the Rabbi's sermons, had ordered her to spit in the preacher's face. Pretending to suffer from his eyes, the Rabbi contrived that the woman publicly spat in his eyes, thus enabling her to obey her husband's comman." The anecdote at least proves that the application of saliva was popularly regarded as a remedy for affections of the eyes."—*Edersheim.* But saliva alone could not cure blindness.

§ 75. Peter's Confession. "High Point in Gospel History." (Mat. 16: 13-20; Mark 8: 27-30; Luke 9: 18-21.)

The time had come when the Master provoked an expression of faith from His disciples. When Jesus had

walked on the water, they had owned Him as "the Son of God," but Edersheim states that even that term did not carry the meaning that is expressed in "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Chrysostom said that Peter was "the mouth of the Apostles." But what Peter here expresses had come to him as a revelation from the heavenly Father, rather than a conclusion reached by the apostolic group going into session and coming to an agreement.

The importance of this confession may be gathered from Rom. 10:10. When we note that "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation," we can approximate the value of Peter's utterance. It has been noted that since Jesus' reply to Peter is omitted by both Mark and Luke, that it is not so important as the Roman Catholics make it and, as Beza suggests, this omission weighs against the "permanent supremacy of Peter." Added to this is the stubborn fact that there is *no solid evidence that Peter was ever Bishop of Rome.*

Evidently Jesus did *not* say that He would build His church upon Peter, but upon Peter's Confession. Jesus, speaking in Aramaic, addressed him first as Simon, son of Jonah (Bar—son). This calls our attention to Peter's natural weakness and hence his being ill-fitted to be the "chief corner-stone," which truly was Christ Himself.

"The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ our Lord."

Allowing for all the growth in grace evidenced by Peter's epistles, as contrasted with his earlier conduct, yet we would feel insecure to have him, I say it reverently, as our "foundation." Why not take Christ who walked on the sea while Peter sank? Certainly the exegesis of the passage warrants our believing that the church rests on Christ rather than Peter, as we shall soon see. Then, if Rome's theory were correct, would not Peter's successors have given a better account of themselves? What of the "Pornocracy?" The theory sinks with its own weight of encumbrances.

Now to the exegesis. Jesus did not say, "Thou art Peter [petros] and upon this Peter [petros] I will build my church," but rather "Thou art Peter [petros] and upon

this rock [petra] I will build my church." Petros, masculine gender, is a stone, a detached rock. Petra, a feminine gender, is a chief, a base rock, "a living rock." Now Peter was *of that Rock.* He would have been unable to have made the Great Confession which was the "High Point in the Gospel History" had he not been of Christ the Rock, "smitten" for the thirsty multitudes, but one day to roll upon rebellious governments and grind them to powder. But he was not petra but petros, just Peter still and not a "sure foundation," though not yet sand either and much less of the earth, earthy. As Edersheim so well translates this passage, we shall let his rendering be our last word on the exegesis—"Thou art Peter (Petros) and upon this Petra (The Petrine) will I build my Church." Upon Peter's confession the Church was to be built.

Since Peter knew by revelation just who Jesus was, he was the proper one to receive the keys, symbols of authority, that would open the door into "The Room of Grace." And John records "I am the door." This Door swings open to all who join with Peter in saying "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Since Christ is the Door, we, by a simple step of faith, pass through Him into the Church, the assembly of saints, separated unto Him. "Bind" and "loose" were terms suited to the understandings of the disciples, trained in Judaism. The Rabbis had a *legislative* function. They not only emphasized laws of the Old Testament Scriptures, but they made many new ones as the Talmud shows. Thus they made by their legislation, certain acts to be *lawful* and others *unlawful.* Their action as a Rabbinic assembly was *prohibitive* as well as *permissive* in respect to the conduct of the Jews. When their laws prohibited, they "bound"; when they permitted any act they "loosed," the one who comitted it. So, by the same principle, Peter, who had new light, could "bind" and "loose."

Then the Rabbis also had a *judicial* function and as judges they would "remit," that is, free from blame, or "retain," that is, hold one to pay a penalty. Now Christ apparently transferred these powers to Peter first and later to the other

apostles and we believe through them to the Church. (Cf. John 20:23.)

So when you meet a sinner you authoritatively point out Christ, the Saviour, to him and point him to Christ. You quote to him the promise when he seeks salvation, you rebuke and charge him with sin and so condemn him. There is a great danger of Protestantism minimizing the use of "the keys" simply because Romanism has abused their use.

§ 76. Christ Foretells His Death and Resurrection. (Mat. 16:21-28; Mark 8:3—9:1; Luke 9:22-27.)

When Jesus first told of His coming passion, Peter took issue with Him. Peter could not bear the thought of Christ's suffering, so he said, "Mercy be to Thee." The Jews used such an expression, but usually said it as follows, "Mercy and peace to Thee." Their idea was to hope that God would avert the impending calamity. Peter wished for Jesus a smooth pathway, a calm sea, a painless life, rather than a painful, shameful death.

Peter there erred in *appealing to the human in Christ.* Satan had done this when he tempted Christ. Jesus therefore addressed Peter with the stern "Get thee behind me, Satan." He pointed out that Peter had a human viewpoint. His advice was that Christ should please Himself, but this was contrary to the Master's program and intention for His sojourn on earth.

Ah! how often do Christians wish for each other an "easy berth." We dislike to see our dear ones being disciplined. But let us recall that we are to follow in our Master's footsteps. He travelled a rough road. (Cf. 1 Peter 4:1). Peter learned the lesson.

But Peter's seemingly inappropriate and untimely rebuke was utilized by Jesus as an opportunity to teach His followers that they would be called upon to "deny themselves." There were crosses to be borne. Before them was not a Messianic Kingdom with its attendant glory, but the torture of their Roman masters. But He assured them that *denying* self now and thus losing one's life, would prepare for the finding of a larger life in His time and way. Then He

did predict His own coming in glory attended by angels, when all matters would be adjudicated. His urge was for them to live patiently and "value the future."

Then followed that difficult prophecy that some there present would, ere death came, see "the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom." Does this refer to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., when the lurid flames, devouring the city and temple, would illuminate the Sign of the Cross and convince them that Jesus was indeed "King of the Jews?"

§ 77. The Transfiguration. (Mat. 17: 1-13; Mark 9: 2-13; Luke 9: 28-36.)

Mountain and solitude scenes are quite prominent in Bible History. Here have been "solemn transactions."

(a) Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah.
(b) Moses at the Burning Bush and on Mount Sinai.
(c) Elijah alone on Horeb.
(d) Elijah and Elisha at the former's ascension.
(e) And this occasion when Christ was alone with Peter, James and John. He took these three with Him—
    (1) Into Jairus' home.
    (2) To the Mount of Transfiguration.
    (3) To Gethsemane.

Jesus had gone up into the mountain to pray and He was "transfigured."

Moses the lawgiver and Elijah of the prophets were there present to testify to Peter, James and John of His genuineness. These three have been likened to a column of which Moses, the law, was the base, Elijah, the prophets, the main shaft, and Christ the glorious apex, or cap-stone.

A voice out of the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son," etc. It is little wonder that Peter and James and John "fell on their face, and were sore afraid" for they had seen Moses and Elijah and their glorified Master, besides hearing God's voice. Surely, when they saw no one, save Jesus only, they would hold Him in higher esteem because of this celestial experience. The possible purposes of this transfiguration were:

(a) For the disciples' benefit in view of Peter's remonstrance to His death, (See 2 Peter 1: 16-18 for impression made on Peter).
(b) For Jesus' strengthening,
(c) And as an earnest of our own transformation.

§ 78. The Demoniac Boy. (Mat. 17: 14-20; Mark 9: 14-29; Luke 9: 37-43a.)

What a contrast in this scene and that of the transfiguration! The disciples' failure was evident. Their failure was entirely due to "faithlessness"—unbelief and lack of spiritual faith.

We are here reminded of the power of prayer which avails when dogma and formula fail.

§ 79. Christ Again Foretells His Death and Resurrection. (Mat. 71: 22, 23; Mark 9: 30-32; Luke 9: 43b-45.)

Here we see the need of frequent repetition to impress the hearers or to clear the teacher at least.

§ 80. The Shekel in the Fish's Mouth. Mat. 17: 24-27.

As this narrative plainly states, those that collected the taxes approached Peter as he came into Capernaum with the Master, asking if Jesus did not pay the half shekel, and Peter knowing the Lord's attitude toward the taxes replied, "Yea." Doubtless Peter remembered Jesus' statement "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." The amazement of Peter must have been great when upon coming into the house Jesus said to him, "What thinkest thou, Simon? The kingdoms of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute? From their sons or from strangers?" When Peter replied, "From strangers," then Jesus remarked "therefore the sons are free." This conversation between Christ and Peter bristles with suggestiveness. It seems evident that Jesus was taking this opportunity to teach Peter by means of a parable. He is saying that He is the Son of the Kingdom. Since His Father is the King of all realms, why should He pay toll or tribute?

After Jesus had had this conversation with Peter He instructed him to catch the fish in whose mouth was the shekel with which Peter might pay the toll both for the Master and for himself. By His knowing of this coin in the mouth of the fish He evinces His deity and this must have impressed Peter with His divine nature. As I see the incident it was all for the purpose of teaching Peter; so here no doubt the Lord took infinite pains to instruct him who was to be the leader among the apostles.

§ 81. Discourse on Humility and Forgiveness. Mat. 18: 1-35; Mark 9: 33-50; Luke 9: 46-50.

The first part of this section deals with the importance of childlikeness. The disciples were disputing as to who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus' answer was a rebuke as well as necessary instruction. It told them that conversion which produces childlikeness is necessary to entering the kingdom of heaven. Then He stressed the importance of valuing humility highly and informed them that He carefully guarded His "little ones."

The great lesson for us here is that in the kingdom of heaven the rich and the poor meet together. The haughty Saul of Tarsus styled himself "less than the least of the saints." We are reminded of the Master's "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The greatest things of Christianity have to do with humility. Phil. 2 teaches us that the Incarnation was a coming down.

Then to those that are really humble the Master assures divine protection. There is a woe pronounced upon the world because of occasions of stumbling. "Woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh." Jesus points out the worth of an individual soul and advocates the "surgery of the saints." The offending hand or foot or eye is to be gotten rid of so that the individual might be spared. God is careful for His children even as the shepherd for his sheep. So Jesus advocated, "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace one with another." Mark 9: 50. The salt of peaceful humility is to be the savour of the saints to preserve them from bickering and quarrelling for positions. The disciples had not learned to observe the

exhortation, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt," etc.

In Mat. 18:15—Jesus gives the method of restoring peace with a brother, by, first, the private interview and then by calling in two witnesses, and as a last resort telling it to the church. All these means must be used to bring peace with a brother ere we think of him as a Gentile and a Publican. The Master then would stress the seriousness and responsibility of life by saying, "What things soever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," etc. 18:18. Then being unable to get away from the fact of the importance of peace He shows them how that agreement is vitally connected with effectual prayer. 18:19-20. Then Peter comes forth with the interrogation, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Unto seven times?" Jesus' reply, "I say not unto thee until seven times but until seventy times seven," indicates that the principle of forgiveness disregards mathematics. But in the parable that follows, Mat. 18:23-35, Jesus teaches that those that forgive, will be forgiven indeed, whereas those that know not how to forgive will not enjoy forgiveness.

§ 82. Christ at the Feast of Tabernacles. (John 7:1-52.)

Vs. 1-9. We are at the Feast of Tabernacles, and this Feast presented a very cosmopolitan scene in Jerusalem. The people that came to the Feast were Jews, but they were Jews from all lands. They would be the swarthy sons of the Danube, westerners from Spain, those from northern Africa, from Greece and Rome and all over. They would be distinguished by their garb, but you could tell that they were Jews by their physiognomies. Doubtless they came with great interest. This Feast came at a most opportune time, the weather conditions being most favorable. The Passover came in the winter season and the Feast of Pentecost, which came forty-nine days after Passover, came in the heat of the summer, but this Feast came in the delicious cool of early autumn, and so the Jews called it "The

Feast." One writer calls it the greatest and holiest of all feasts.

It symbolized the future. This Feast of Tabernacles was a feast of thanksgiving. They thanked the Lord for the harvest, and it looked forward to the fruitage of the Jews. They there sacrificed seventy bullocks, thinking of these seventy bullocks being the seventy nations of heathendom. Also, as we shall show shortly, there was a part in the feast when the water was taken from the Pool of Siloam and poured on the sacrifice, significant of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost.

Just at the dawn of the feast the priest would go to the temple and say—"Our fathers sinned because they looked toward the east, the rising of the sun, but we are Jehovah's. Our eyes are toward Jehovah."

It was to this feast that the Jews went and to this feast that the brethren of Jesus urged Him to go.

There is a period of six or seven months between this feast and the last passover. This Feast of Tabernacles involved a lot of preparation. Hence note the expression "at hand"—Greek—engidso. When it was time for this feast, the Jews made preparation and set up the booths which were used. It was similar to setting up a camp. So these different people would try to get to Jerusalem before time in order that they might catch up with their sacrifices. For this reason the brethren were anxious to get Jesus there early.

"His brethren did not believe on him." They are later reported as being His disciples, but at this time they did not believe in Him. But there was a brotherly interest in Him, because of His Messianic claims. He had said enough that they might have gathered this from what He said. So they thought that the thing to do was for Him to go up and show what He could do. Note verse 4, "For no man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly." They wanted His works to be tested by those that would be capable of testing His works.

Note Verse 3, "that thy disciples also may *behold* thy works which thou doest."

His own brethren wanted Him to go up to this feast and

display His power,—"make a fair show in the flesh." This suggested in the use of this word "theoreo."

This challenge to go to this feast was reasonable, but they forgot that real discipleship is not the result of evidence, but it is a conversion of one of a childlike spirit. This is something the disciples had not learned.

What does Jesus answer these brethren? Jesus therefore saith unto them, My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. Note use of Greek word "kairos." Kairos means "opportunity," chronos "time in general." What He says really is this, "My opportunity is not yet come, but your opportunity is already here." He implies that these brethren of His were not of Him. Jesus was against the world and hence the world hated Him.

Now when they went to the Feast of Tabernacles, they went up in bands, but Jesus did not go up that way, and when they got there they sought Him and asked, "Where is He?" (vs. 11 and 12). This shows the notoriety of Jesus. Jesus' method was ultra-worldly. It was beyond the world's method. He had His own reasons for not doing what His brethren wanted Him to do.

Notice that as He got there, vs. 14 and 15, He went in and taught in the midst of all that commotion. Compare Luke 4:18. Letters here stand for rabbinical learning and that was through the rabbis. Jesus got His learning without going through one of the schools of the rabbis and they could not understand that. Socrates debated that there is such a thing as truth,—take all the garments and vestments off and there is truth. The common people heard Him gladly. They recognized truth. Jesus spoke the truth and the common people heard Him. The scribes and Pharisees would not hear Him because it would be a reflection on the school of the rabbis.

Christ's Teaching Tested

Christ's teaching was valid because it was of God. He was a self-confessed teacher, teaching not His own, but that of God. If the Pharisees and scribes had been unprejudiced, they would have admitted His teaching.

As to tests of teaching:

1. Test of the drawing power of the teaching. Jesus asserted that His teaching drew sincere seekers. Note Verse 17. It did draw sincere seekers. Cf. John 6:68, 69. When Peter wanted authentic utterance, he went to Christ. Jesus said "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself." Pectus Facit Theologum—"the heart makes the truly God taught."

2. As to whether or not the teacher seeks His own glory. Verse 18.

"He that speaketh from himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." Keep in mind the word "true" and also note the same word in verse 28. The word "true" in verse 18 means that Jesus was not a liar,—that He was a man noted for veracity. The test was as to whether He was seeking his own glory. They put a question to Him. Jesus then answered them and questioned them. Verse 19. "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law? Why seek ye to kill me?" It was a double question. "Even if Moses gave the law, you did not keep it yourselves. You did not keep the law and now you are going to kill me for not keeping the law which you yourselves did not keep." Following through here we have the interesting fact brought out that Jesus accused them of simply judging according to appearances. Verse 24. He simply accused them of externalism. They based their statements on appearances rather than on reality. He just told them that they did not interpret as they saw. You can well imagine how Christ became disgusted with the logic of these people.

Verse 25. "Is not this he whom they seek to kill?" Verse 26. "And lo, he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to Him. Can it be that the rulers indeed know that this is the Christ?" The question of Jesus' Messiahship is raised in this verse because of the fact that He speaks openly though they had been seeking to kill Him. Were they admitting that He was the Messiah?

These fickle people, from the fact that Jesus is teaching

openly, say that maybe He is the Messiah because the chief priests and Pharisees are letting Him talk, but then somebody raised the popular rumor that when the Messiah came He would come suddenly, unexpectedly, but this man they had known and had known from whence He came (v. 27) and on this they rejected Him. The common people by their common judgment would have claimed Him as their Messiah, but the minute they brought in their own traditions, they would reject Him. These traditions, however, were so often faulty, and when applied to Christ would not fit and hence He would be rejected. This question was settled by those who were present by reverting to the possible belief that the Messiah would come suddenly and unexpectedly. Of course this was wrong although it was their conclusion.

Verses 28 and 29 represent Christ's vindication of His own claims. After they had raised this question and answered it, Jesus was rejected by the people. Jesus did not let this stand, but cried out in the temple, as verse 28 says, "Ye both know me, and know whence I am and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not." Christ is vindicating here His own claim to being true and not a false teacher. Apparently He did it for the sake of those of His own disciples who were there present. Note the word *"true."* "I am the verri vine," is the way Wycliffe translates John 15:1. This word "true" in verse 28 means genuine or real.

Verse 30 asserts that His time had not come. In the life of Christ there was a plan and hence there was protection. They could not do a thing with Jesus until His hour came because His life was according to a "blueprint," and hence that life was carefully guarded by God. But notice what happened, v. 31. Jesus there received the popular approval. The people could not help but feel that He was so extraordinary that even the Messiah, for whom they were looking, could not do more. This irritated the scribes and Pharisees and verse 32 teaches "the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to take Him." If Jesus had been nobody, He would not have been bothered, but He was bothered by the Pharisees and scribes simply because there was something to Him which influenced the people. We are never jealous

of an inferior. We are jealous of a superior and maybe an equal, but never an inferior.

The cries (v. 37) of Christ in the Gospel of John are interesting. It meant that He raised His voice and threw it and everybody listened to Him. He says (v. 37), "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." These words probably suggest the fact that on each day of the Feast of Tabernacles water was brought in a golden pitcher from the Pool of Siloam. This was an elaborate procession. Two priests, one carrying water and the other wine, were followed by the people carrying flowers in their hands. The two priests went to the altar where there were two pipes, one on each side, through which the water and wine were poured. It was during the pouring of this water that Jesus said this. The meaning we get from this is that anywhere, at any time, the Holy Spirit may be received and will be poured out from the lives of Christians that have received Him because Jesus said, "He that believeth on me . . ., out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The Jews understood the meaning of this well enough to know that this was typical of the Holy Spirit to be poured out one day.

Notice verse 39. Do not try to teach the reception of the Holy Spirit subsequent to faith on this passage alone because the Holy Spirit was not yet given. Jesus was not yet glorified. The Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost—"the birthday of the Holy Spirit." But all who do receive Jesus now may, as soon as they will receive this fulness of the Holy Spirit so that from their lives there will flow rivers of living water. So this truth announced here you and I appropriate spiritually now because the Holy Spirit has come and nothing hinders our accepting what Jesus taught them.

Verse 40 and following teach that a *division* arose among these people simply *because they did not know the history of Jesus.* A few facts would have saved them. Had they really known a few things they would have accepted Christ as the Messiah. Everything they listened to with an unbiased mind they admitted. Note verses 40-43. They did not know Christ's history. God's will is that we all believe the same thing,—think the same thing. Ephesians says we

have gifts which are given that we might all come *into* the unity of the faith. Christ prayed that His disciples might all be *one*. Why do we differ? Ignorance and prejudice. There is just one Bible and just one record of things. It is the interpretation that makes the difference.

Note what follows in verses 45-49. Note the *contempt of the chief priests and the Pharisees for the conclusions of the unlettered.* These Pharisees and chief priests had such a contempt for the unlettered that they did not believe that there was any hope for the resurrection of the unlettered. They were "highbrows." Notice, they seem to think nothing of what the officers say. If they had left it up to the rank and file of men, the middle class, Jesus would have been accepted as the Messiah. This, however, was not God's plan. Jesus made a favorable impression on the people. They knew He was right, but the chief priests and Pharisees were so prejudiced and jealous and bigoted that they would not admit the truth, so they denounced Christ.

Verses 50 and 51. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin. Of Nicodemus' mild defense of Christ, S. D. Gordon says, "This was fair but feeble." In a court of law that was a diplomatic way of doing a thing. It was just a commonplace expression, and commonplaces at such a time do not help. That was fair, but too feeble! Had Martin Luther been a timid man, would he have done the business? The stand which Nicodemus there took helped not the cause of Jesus and it disguised not the advocacy of Nicodemus. For Nicodemus to put up this question did not help Jesus any and also divulged to the other members of the Sanhedrin that he was for Jesus. The lesson is, don't try to "carry water on both shoulders." They put Nicodemus to silence by saying to him, "Art thou also of Galilee?" Nothing more was said.

§ 83. The Woman Taken in Adultery. John 7: 53-8: 11.

As today, so in the days of Christ's bodily presence on earth, He was the touchstone of all who came in contact with Him. Men divided over Him. Some said, "He is a good man"; others said, "Not so, but he leadeth the multi-

tude astray" (Jno. 7:12). "The Jews therefore marvelled saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (Jno. 7:15). "Some of the multitude . . . said, 'This is of a truth the prophet'" (7:40). "Others said, This is the Christ" (7:41). "But some said, What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee?" (7:41). "So there arose a division . . . because of Him" (7:43). The Pharisees were genuinely provoked at the officers because the latter did not apprehend Christ and take Him to them. The officers gave as an excuse, "Never man so spake." Whereupon the Pharisees twitted them, classing them with the ignorant multitude. Finally, it was the scribe and Pharisee class that was bent on rejecting Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee. Their chief reason, as given, was, "Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (7:52).

These varying opinions of the Master prevailed at the Feast of Tabernacles. It was while Jesus was attending this feast that He was in such demand as a teacher. "All the people came unto him." Despite Jewish antagonism (Jno. 7:1), He seemed to be realizing the ambition of His brethren (Jno. 7:3-4).

But the scribes and Pharisees were ill at ease so long as He was the center of attraction. A woman had been found in adultery. They use this as a test case on Jesus in order to embarrass Him before the multitude. So the woman, "their trembling prisoner—unveiled, and exposed before the crowd of men—the bitterest degradation to an Eastern woman, they set before Jesus."—*Geikie.* Then, affecting deference to Him whom they despised, they, with feigned humility, asked, "Teacher, this woman hath been taken in adultery, in the very act. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such: what then sayest thou of her?"

As John explains, "And this they said, tempting (trying) him, that they might have whereof to accuse him." These heartless accusers of this poor, unfortunate victim, these adverse critics of the Son of God, thought they had Christ between the horns of a dilemma. Moses' law was on one side and His teachings on mercy and forgiveness on the other. If He were true to Moses how could He be merciful to the woman? And if He were inclined to exercise mercy,

then what of the requirements of the law in such a case? But they did not really know Jesus. His resourcefulness, in this instance, grew out of His goodness, His purity, His gentlemanliness; yes, and His knowledge of their hypocrisy.

The God-man could not deal with the case heartlessly and mechanically. So, blushing, we fancy, He "stooped down, and . . . wrote on the ground." What did He write? I am of the opinion that had the woman's accusers read they would not have been compelled to listen to His indirect accusation. But they, thinking they had the "Greater than Solomon" in a corner, *"continued asking him."* So sure were they of their case that they suffered from over-confidence. So finally and slowly Jesus "lifted himself and said, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Then He again stooped and went on with His writing. What else could He do? He left them with their own guilty consciences, and the scrutinizing gaze of a curious, if not an accusing, crowd. They filed out, the eldest, who "best knew the plague of their own hearts" (Smith), leading the way. This was the reversal of the procedure in the Sanhedrin, where the vote is taken "beginning with the youngest." This reversal showed their embarrassment and confusion.

So Jesus was left alone with the woman—*misera et misericordia,* as Augustine has it. He who was full of pity was left with her that was pitiable. No one had condemned her by casting a stone at her (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:24). The Master, in charity, quieted her penitent fears with "Neither do I condemn thee." He, in candor and caution, strengthened her irresolute will with, "From henceforth sin no more."

The accusers were self-condemned; the accused left hopeful and purged.

§ 84. Discourse on the Light of the World. John 8: 12-30.

This discussion was doubtless delivered on one of the porches of the Court of the Women. This Court of the Women was brilliantly illuminated by four great candelabra, and as Christ gazed upon these great lights that burned dur-

ing the feast, He thought of what He was to the world as to light, as He says in verse 12. This illumination by these candelabra in the Court of the Women was known as the *joy of the feast,* and Christ was speaking to Jews here. Probably not the Jews of Galilee, but of Judea and Jerusalem and hence they did not know Him so well as His fellow Galileans. But being Jews, they would all have some conception of what He meant by the light, for they looked for a Messiah who would be a light, who would reveal the light of God. If they had believed that He was the Messiah, they would have thought of this Jewish conception.

Notice, as verse 16 indicates, that as soon as He had made this claim, He provoked the Pharisees, who said, "Thou bearest witness of thyself; thy witness is not true." That is to say, Christ made a bold authoritative utterance that He was the light of the world, and the Pharisees were not willing to admit His statement. They said that it was His own statement and He had no one to corroborate His own statement.

Verse 14 tells how difficult His task was. No one there knew whence He had come and whither He was going because no one else present had come with Him.

They misjudged, but He did not. So this implication in verse 15 is simply that Christ showed them that they had a moral incapacity to understand Him. "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. Yea and if I judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." So He raises this other point. He is not alone for His Father is attesting to Him, is bearing witness. Nothing is stated here as to what He refers to as the testimony of the Father, but doubtless He was thinking of the works that He had done which should have convinced them that God was back of Him. It was a two-fold witness—supernatural works and His own witness. See verse 17. But they had a moral incapacity, which Jesus tells them. Christ, by bringing in the witness of the Father together with His own witness, had a real case according to their law, but they could not see it because of its being incomprehensible to them through their moral incapacity. This was the difficulty through which Jesus labored all the time.

Verse 21 and following refer to the fruitless quest of the Jews for the Messiah down through the centuries. He said, "I go away—whither I go, ye cannot come." There has been a seeking for the Messiah ever since Christ's day on the part of the Jews. This has been a fruitless quest. We cannot help but think just here of how professedly Christian nations have driven out the Jews, persecuted the Jews, but Jesus in His prophetic utterance maybe foretold that. Where Christ has taken the Church, Judaism cannot follow. Christ says, "Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins."

The reason for their dying in their sins and not seeing Him, was that they were *mundane or worldly*. That is to say, they were simply of the world. He said in verse 23, "I am not of this world." The implication was that they were, and because of this, they would die in their sins. Faith in Christ is the touchstone. It is the test.

Note the statement in verse 28, "Jesus therefore said, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he." That is to say, "You will not be in doubt." The light of the world, according to the Jewish conception, would be the Messiah. They doubted it, but Jesus said, "There is coming a time when ye shall know that I am he." The question is, "What does He mean by verse 28?" This expression "lifted up" is used in two senses both in the Hebrew and following in the Greek, and the idea is that you may be lifted up in shame, as Christ was on Calvary's cruel cross, or you may be lifted up in exaltation. Scholars indicate that either one of those interpretations is allowable. Wasn't that true when Christ was crucified? On the other hand, there is coming a time when Christ is to be exalted over the Jews, and at that time they will doubtless think of what He said at this time.

Notice verse 30 which teaches that the convincing life of Christ caused converts to come to Him. There were many who followed Him, and the thing that we see right through here is that the issue is between Christ and the religious teachers; not an issue between Christ and the common people, but between Christ and the religious teachers. They had certain rules and regulations that they expected the

Messiah to come up to, but their expectations were not exactly right and so they failed.

§ 85. Discourse on Spiritual Freedom. John 8: 31-59.

Notice in verse 33 and following that the Jews boasted of their freedom, simply because of their ancestry. They were Abraham's seed. Jesus soon tells them that they are really servants because they are slaves to their own sinful selves. So, although they think they are free, they think mistakenly, and actually He tells them that they are bond-servants rather than freemen.

This discourse gave Him occasion to again announce His sonship. What He actually does is to contrast the place and permanency of the Son with the servant. Of course, He is the *Son* and they are the *servants*.

Consider how this would humiliate them. Though Abraham's seed on the natural side, yet they were of the devil. See verse 44.

Verse 46 asks, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" To convince a man, you must get him to say *amen* to what you say in reference to him.

Jesus our Lord and Master, by making these statements, brings Himself, as they think, into clash with Abraham. Notice verse 52 and following. Here you have Christ contrasted with Abraham and the prophets, and in this we see that they recognized that these were the good and great men of the past.

These men had all died, and this Jesus is pretending to teach a doctrine which, if they accept, will keep them from death, and they could not understand that. They thought only of natural death.

In verse 54 and following you have Jesus' rebuttal to their statements. Christ was thought by the Jews to have exalted Himself above Abraham, yet really Abraham had exalted Christ. The Jews accused Christ of self-exaltation, of placing Himself above Abraham. But Jesus specifically states that Abraham had looked forward to the day of the Messiah, and Abraham had rejoiced to see the day of the Messiah, but they did not understand these things. Here is the pathos of it all. See Luke 24—the walk to Emmaus.

They did not understand their own Scriptures. It was a dark and unknown language to them. So as Jesus spoke here He referred to the same incidents they did, but He glorified those instances. He gave them the proper meaning. Had Abraham lived He would have been the first one to have taken up with Christ. If we are not careful it will be impossible for us to say with the Psalmist, "I am wiser than my teachers." All these Jews lacked the vision, the perspective of Abraham, and they could not appreciate His words. So we need spiritual insight. The only way to get the meaning of the Bible is by having the Holy Spirit illuminate our minds.

Do you think that His own disciples understood Him? By no means, but they followed Him by naked faith. They went on to Pentecost and waited there. Then they began to understand.

Here is a case of the clash of a great man embodying the truth of God, with a system, and that is where the feathers fly,—that is where things happened. When you come into conflict with a system, folks will stand up for it.

In verse 58 the eternity of Christ is suggested. Jesus is trying to tell these poor people of His being eternal. "Before Abraham was, I am." That is to say, "Before Abraham became, I was." Or "Before Abraham was, I was." But Jesus does not live in any "was" or "will be," He lives in the "I am," the eternal now, or present. "Before Abraham made his appearance, before that, I was, and I am, and I ever will be." Christ tried to get these folks to see the eternity of the Son of God. They didn't have an apperceptive basis, so He spoke in dark language.

PART VII

Perean Ministry

§ 86. The Final Departure from Galilee. Mat. 19: 1, 2; 8: (18) 19-22; Mark 10: 1; Luke 9: 51-62.

The interesting part to us is the study of the 19th verse and following of Matthew 8. There are two classes of persons mentioned here. One class is represented by this scribe who was an impulsive person, and evidently he was inconsiderate. He had not counted the cost, and so he simply said, "I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." Jesus rather discouraged this man by telling him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." The Lord Jesus Christ wanted this man to know that the Kingdom's interest would come first and that he must be willing, if he would follow the Lord, to give up home for the interests of the Kingdom, and that is about all there is to be said of this character,—*impulsive, inconsiderate,* did not count the cost, and so Jesus tried to get him to count the cost.

The other case before us is that of a certain disciple who made the excuse that he must bury his father. As to whether his father was dead or not we do not know. There were those who were not called who could have looked after him. The teaching here is that there are higher duties than those of keeping the Jewish law which called for the burying of the father by the son, and even higher duties than those of natural reverential ties; and there is a *higher call* than the call of men. There is a higher call than any of these. The important thing also is that there are critical times that come into our lives, and Christ wants us to pay attention to these particular times and act—strike while the iron is hot.

You will notice that Luke brings in apparently another instance of a man who said, "I will follow Thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house." Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

Doubtless here Christ is re-enforcing the need of strict attention to the business of following Christ by alluding to the ploughman and his work and by the ploughman's necessary application to his work. To look back would be to make a crooked furrow or a crooked row. You have to keep your eye upon the mark. The practical point is strict attention to business.

We sum this up in the following points:

1. Self-denial. This may mean homelessness.
2. Prompt surrender to Christ's work.
3. Attention to the Master's business.

§ 87. The Mission of the Seventy. Luke 10: 1-24.

The first thing to be noted is the difference between the sending out of the seventy and the sending out of the twelve. The sending out of the twelve was an appointment to the apostolate. It was evangelistic and missionary. There was no power or authority formally conferred upon the seventy. It was just a temporary mission for one definite purpose, and that was to prepare for Christ's going to different places. John the Baptist came to prepare for Christ's coming as the Messiah of the Jews. He was the forerunner. Just as John the Baptist made preparation for the first coming of Christ to the Jews, so these seventy made preparation for Christ that He might enter the cities from Galilee to Jerusalem. If applied to ourselves, we today, like those seventy, are to go ahead and prepare for Christ's coming to earth.

§ 88. The Good Samaritan. Luke 10: 25-37.

Lawyer	*"Made Trial"*
Student of law.	Malice in heart.
Teacher of law.	A forbidden kind of trial-making.
Pharisee.	
Self-righteous, conceited.	Unusual Greek word for this (ekpeiradzo) test thoroughly.
It was his living.	
Tried to maintain his reputation.	Wanted to justify self.
Felt a sense of superiority.	

"Neighborliness

1. Who is my neighbor?
   a. Whom others neglect.
   b. Whom I may help.
   c. Whom I might have hated.
2. Proof of neighborliness.
   a. Forgetfulness of past.
   b. Tender care in present.
   c. Provision in future."

—Dr. Breed.

"Our Samaritan Neighbors

1. Who are they?
2. What mistakes toward them?
3. What do we learn from them?
4. How did Christ treat them?
5. Are you Christians?"

—Dr. Breed.

§ 89. The Visit to Mary and Martha. Luke 10:38-42.

When Jesus was upon earth, He was the object of the adoration of His friends, as well as the target for the criticism of His enemies. He was the magnetic figure which attracted that small group to whom He committed the Church before His ascension, but at the same time caused chaos to reign in the camp of His enemies. Their pet theories and dearly held traditions He often belittled. The narrative before us presented, as given by Luke, shows how He dealt with those that adored Him.

We here see Jesus in the home of His friends.

1. Mary's receptivity.

The home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus was often the haven of Jesus to which He would betake Himself from the storm on the sea of life. There He found congenial companionship and fertile soil for the precious seed of truth. This home was doubtless a most interesting one. Certainly the two sisters were sufficiently different as to afford variety.

Mary chose to sit at Jesus' feet and hear His word. She evidently was not the hostess. Being the younger of the two, she assumed little responsibility and so was free to contemplate the wonderful teaching of the Master Teacher.

2. Martha's Responsibility.

Martha, on the other hand, was cumbered by much serving. She was not satisfied unless everything was properly arranged about the home. According to her ideals, nothing short of a perfectly arranged home would do. She was concerned about preparing a sumptuous repast for her distinguished guest and was distressed because Mary did not share her responsibility. So great was her anxiety in the matter that she approached Jesus with the almost reproachful question, "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?" The purpose of her question to Jesus was that He would bid Mary arise from her seat of learning and busy herself about the house, but instead of Jesus doing this, He addressed Martha by repeating her name. His "Martha, Martha," reminds us of his saying to Peter, "Simon, Simon," and to Saul, "Saul, Saul." Certainly He reproached Martha because she was troubled about many things. He was advising Martha to live a simple life, and approving of Mary, because she had "chosen that good part."

3. Modern Marys and Marthas.

Clearly Martha and Mary stand for two distinct types of Christians. There are those who emphasize works so strongly that worship is well nigh excluded, and of course there are those that are so given up to devotion that they are likely to neglect the practical affairs. We cannot let Mary stand for this latter class, however, because Jesus had no word of condemnation for her and surely He would have condemned any laxity in practical matters. Our idea is that Mary stands for the class of Christians that gives sufficient time to sitting at Jesus' feet. Christians of this type need not neglect those necessary duties of life over which the type represented by Martha wastes so much nervous energy. The reproof given Martha should be taken by all who imagine that the best of life can be gotten out of

ministering to the appetites and æsthetic tastes. Just as Martha would have had the home arranged so as to please the most fastidious taste, and supper prepared that would tempt any one, so there are those today who believe that the most important thing is to be catering to the tastes of their fellows. They try to make the world better by showing forth the beautiful. They are active in the lines of social service. They are students of dietetics. They go in for the study of sanitation. They spend a lot of time on the architecture of the Church building. They devise proper forms of worship and see that they are carried out most punctiliously. But too often they fail to do that for which Mary was commended by Jesus, though condemned by Martha: They fail to sit at Jesus' feet. The pathos of it all is that the Christian of the Martha type tries to satisfy herself with the husks and neglects the corn. If we learn of Christ surely we will be adjusted to the world about us with less trouble than if we did not know Christ. He helps us understand the world. Communion with Him develops character; it makes men and women.

§ 90. Healing of the Man Born Blind. John 9.

The first thing to be noted in this section is that human incapacity or sickness is not always a result of sin (that is what verse 3 tells), but, as is here stated, "that the works of God should be manifested." That is the reason he was born blind. Of course, the Jews of that day had some knowledge of prenatal influence as we do, and they applied that to things religious. You know how that was in the case of Job. The "miserable comforters" believed that surely Job had sinned when he was sick. The book of Job was written just to show the opposite. He wasn't sick because he had sinned. God had him sick for a purpose. Generally speaking, sin is the result of the fall.

Note the use of means—remedies. He used clay and He used spittle. Edersheim gives this interpretation. He calls our attention to the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ used this means, clay, which was in that day a common remedy for eye trouble, but not for blindness. But He used it to make the blind man receptive. We do not give the blind

man any credit for having his eyes opened. Jesus started in to use this remedy that the blind man might have a chance—to make him receptive since the blind man did not know who Jesus was yet.

This also note as to means. The means were *inadequate.* Naturally the clay had never been known to heal a man of blindness, only of eye trouble. This seems to be the prominent thing. Then note the symbolism of it. He who first breathed on the clay and made man out of the clay, breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, spits on the clay, and the man washes in the Pool of Siloam, from which pool water was taken and used at the Feast of Tabernacles. Water was likened to the Holy Spirit. Now, of course, man's spiritual eyes are opened by God. This is symbolical of it all. He who made man out of the dust of the earth, takes the clay and uses it on man, who is made of clay.

Then the Holy Spirit is used also as the executive power of the Godhead, and the water, symbolical of the Holy Spirit, is brought in. Jesus did not convey by speech all He signified by what He did.

Note that what Jesus did here in bringing this man's sight back to him provoked a division. See verse 13 and following.

Verse 16 states, "And there was a division among them." On what were they divided? Is He of God or not? A division growing out of the question as to whether or not Christ was from God. The blind man was for His being from God. The religionists were against Him. This man voted for Christ as being from God simply because he had experienced the power of God. The religionists voted against Him because He did not agree with their customs and laws. They had pigmy notions. He broke through their notions.

The testimony of the man who had been made to see was true and frank. This man simply told the truth as far as he knew it. He was frank. He was not a diplomat.

Did this man know that Christ was God when He healed him of his blindness? No, but as he went along he came into the light. The testimony had a good effect on him. Let us be true to our experiences. Don't forget what God

has done for us wherever we go. He was brought into a place of deeper experience and greater vision.

Experience is greater than theory. See verse 27 and following. This man was just telling them his experience. Note that the fact of his own experience was in line with the deeper meaning of the Word of God,—that he soon came to the place where he said, "Lord, I believe." Verse 38. This blind man healed was so responsive to Christ that he would take the teaching of Christ. Jesus was in the midst of a lot of blind folks whose eyes had been closed with the traditionalism of the past; and here was a man that God had foreordained should be blind and go into this experience in order that Christ might teach what He wanted to teach. He had come in contact with Christ by experience.

In verses 39-41, Christ is speaking of natural blindness and spiritual blindness,—natural sight and spiritual sight. He is referring to the Pharisees to whom He is speaking. They are as the blind guides. "If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch." Jesus talks to these people and says they may have their eyes opened. By the healing of the blind man, Jesus instructed the blind guides.

§ 91. The Good Shepherd. John 10: 1-21.

1. Christ against the Pharisees.

Christ as the shepherd is given control of the flock by the porter, or night-guard. The sheep at night were guarded by an undershepherd who was called a porter because he watched the door through which the sheep entered. Now when the morning came the real shepherd, the day shepherd, would come to this door and the porter would let him come in and take his flock out. Then there were thieves who were robbers or wall-climbers. Instead of coming to the door, they would sometimes climb over the fence and get the sheep. What Jesus was saying in figure is that these Pharisees were the robbers, the thieves. They were not the real shepherds. This is really the finest section for the study of pastoral work that we can use. Note the change of figures.

The porter is the man who takes care of the sheep at night and this shepherd gives the sheep over to the day

shepherd and Christ is the day shepherd. In contrast with this, the Pharisees are like these wall-climbers. These Pharisees had no concern for the blind man. They were not shepherds. Jesus was the real shepherd, and since the blind man responded, Jesus put the clay on his eyes and the blind man thought that He was going to help his eyes. As soon as there is a little response, then you begin to get the message. The Pharisees did not want to listen to the voice of the shepherd. They wanted to steal the sheep.

2. Christ in allegory.

a. He is the door into the room of grace or into the room of mercy. To come back to the blind man, were the Pharisees willing to admit the blind man into the room of mercy? No. But Christ is the *door.*

b. Christ is the shepherd. Notice the contrast following. He is the good shepherd. The *good* in contrast with false shepherds. He is the good shepherd in contrast with the hireling. See verse 13.

c. Christ is the shepherd, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles. "Other sheep I have." Christ is the shepherd of all the sheep.

d. Christ is the shepherd of one big flock. Verse 16. There may be one flock and one shepherd.

§ 92. Christ at the Feast of Dedication. John 10: 22-42.

This Feast of Dedication was during the early part of December, probably December 1-8, and was just about the time of the birthday of Christ. He spent it in the tabernacle. It was instituted by Judas Maccabeus, 164 B. C.

Now at this feast the Jews came round about Him, as verse 24 says, and said, "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." Verse 25. "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not." This was a hypocritical question and Jesus knew it and so He made his appeal to the works—to the works rather than to words. He goes on to say that they would not believe His works because they were not His sheep. Then He makes the reference to the attitude of the sheep. "My sheep hear

my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (v. 27); and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." Now there is right here a triplet of double parallelisms:

My sheep hear my voice .....man.
I know them .....God.

They follow Me .....man.
I give unto them eternal life .....God.

They shall never perish .....man.
No one shall snatch them out of my hand .....God.

Here we have raised the question of the security of the saints. "No one shall snatch them out of the Father's hands." Verse 29. Christ here identifies Himself with God the Father, and it is not only He who is able to hold His sheep, but God, the Father, is able to hold the sheep, and He and the Father are one. Edersheim says concerning the security of the saints, as follows:

"Do these words convey what is commonly called the doctrine of perseverance of the saints? Nay! but they teach us, not about *our* faith, but about *His* faithfulness, and convey to us assurance concerning Him rather than ourselves; and this is the only aspect in which the doctrine of perseverance is either safe, true or scriptural."

This is very interesting. We hear a lot on this particular verse, "They shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." There are two sides to those truths and that is the reason we dispute about them.

Edersheim warns us here that He is not speaking so much of the faith of the sheep, but the faithfulness of the shepherd. Peter gives us the other side. He says, "We are kept by the power of God through faith." He refers also to the strong hand of God out of which we cannot be plucked as long as our faith holds. We are kept *by faith.*

Notice verse 30. "I and the Father are one." This is a very interesting expression in the original. "Esmen hen" —"we" the plural, and then "one" in the singular. I and the Father one (we are). On this particular passage St.

Augustine remarks that the word "one" tells against Arianism, and the plural "are" tells against Sabellianism.

Arianism—subordination of the Son,—not of the same essence as the Father, but subordinate.

Sabellianism—emphasizes the "one" and the one in the sense of there being only one substance and one person, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being three different names for the same person.

Neither of these is correct, of course. You see right through here that the Jews were rather Arian with respect to Christ (v. 33). They thought He was just an ordinary man. Notice here that Christ appealed to His works.

The Jews attempted to stone Him then. Verses 31 and 32. "For which of those works do ye stone me?" He changed their minds by this question. The works of Christ were beyond doubt. He had done works. His words were doubted, but His works could not be doubted, and His appeal was always finally to His works. Christ came to show us the Father. He was an expression of divinity. He had a mission—to save the world. Now if people would not allow His divinity and would refuse to give cognizance to His mission, then He would plead His works. Here He pleads His works as a last resort.

In verses 33-39 reference is made to the judges who were representatives of God and executives of God, the vicars, and so they were called gods. Now Jesus knew that the Jews believed these Old Testament Scriptures, and so He took them to their own Scriptures. Because He had said He was the Son of God, they said He blasphemed. He simply showed them how illogical they were. They recognized that the judges represented God and why should they take such exception to His being called the Son of God? "If I do not the works of my Father," says He, "believe me not." He again makes appeal to His works.

Verses 40-42 tell of the men who had heard John and they had come to believe after John's death. It is very interesting and encouraging to us who preach the Gospel. They were the posthumous people of John. They believed because of what John had told them before.

§ 93. Discourse on Prayer. (Luke 11: 1-13.)

Verses 1-4. Outline from John L. Campbell, D.D.

"Our Father" ..... Child addressing father.
"Thy kingdom come" ..... Subject to a king.
"Thy will be done" ..... Slave to a master.
"Give us this day," etc. ..... Beggar to beneficiary.
"Forgive us our sins" ..... Sinner to his Saviour.
"Lead us not into temptation." . Pilgrim to guide.
"But deliver us from evil." .... Captive to deliverer.

We speak of this as being a model prayer and think of it as such. This prayer contains the principles that we should follow in praying. Of course, when the Lord gave His disciples this prayer, He did not mean that they should follow in detail.

Verses 5-12 seem to teach that the importunate fellow is the fellow who will receive simply because he *hangs* on. It is a case of simple mechanical ability. But I don't think that that is the point. The lesson is the *value of importunity in view of great difficulties.* It is late at night and the door had been locked and this man is in his bed. There are a great many difficulties. Think also of a great need. Here is a man whose friend has come, travelled a long distance, brought no knapsack, and is very hungry. There is an insistent, clamoring need, but a great many difficulties in the way. If we have a need, present it. The need cries and it is the need that brings the supply. The Lord gives us according to the need. Of course, the Lord teaches that importunity is necessary. If you want something, if you are hungry for something, then you will be *receptive* for it. If there is sufficient importunity, that indicates *receptivity,* and *receptivity* is what receives. He is trying to teach us that if we have a great need and make it known, we will have a supply of that need. But the need has got to be apparent. Now that man needed the bread. Jesus is trying to teach in prayer that if you really want things, go after them. If a man wants a thing, he will pray for it. Your praying is like a robin opening his mouth—he not only opens his mouth, but stretches his neck. *Importunity.*

Note verse 10. "Everyone that asketh receiveth." Translate "everyone"—"anyone" "each one," "any person." The Lord is no respecter of persons. Then He goes on to say that the Holy Spirit will be given us to minister to us the things of God,—to help us out,—and the Holy Spirit is given to them that ask of Him. You will pray, if you want.

§ 94. Discourse Against the Pharisees. (Mat. 12: 22-32; Mark 3: 22-30; Luke 11: 14-54.)

I choose to think of this as "Jesus in the presence of His enemies." Christ had come into open opposition to the Pharisees. These Pharisees, of course, were really in their day like many in our day, in that they did not understand the real meaning of the Scriptures and they put emphasis where emphasis should not have been placed. Here He checks them up, you notice, because they are so punctilious in little matters and so remiss in great matters. They leave undone the things of importance and do things of unimportance. They put emphasis on trivialities at the expense of things important. In our day it is the same.

Another point is that they were fond of the seats of honor in the synagogues. They, I presume, are matched by modern men who enter church politics for prominent places and are not willing to take the lower places until the Lord exalts them. The sin is that of projecting yourself into a place for which you are poorly qualified. These Pharisees were proud men,—wanted to be flattered,—men of conceit. Now Jesus criticised and condemned these Pharisees because of their religious superficiality. They tried to trap Him in His talk. They correspond to Zophar in the Book of Job. They are of little value.

§ 95. Teachings Concerning Trust in God and Coming Judgment. Luke, 12.

I see this as a section of warnings.

Notice it is given to His disciples. v. 1. The text, or pivotical sentence, would be the fifth verse. Luke 12: 5a "I will warn you."

I. Warnings against hypocrisy, vs. 1-12.

1. The Pharisees are the examples of hypocrisy.

a. Revelation is certain. v. 2. There is nothing covered up.

b. Retribution before God is sure. vs. 4, 5.

Of course, the particular charge is to beware lest some minor present inconvenience dim the eyes to the greater future penalty. Now these Pharisees were intimidated and were intimidating those about them, and we must remember that there is a reckoning day coming, and so we have this warning.

c. The reward is reckoned. v. 6. Divine justice deals with details.

d. The resistance to the good offices of the Holy Spirit is necessarily damning. vs. 8-12.

That is to say, here you have Christians against the good offices of the Holy Spirit. Now the Holy Spirit is to come and tell you what to do, to guide you into all truth, and if you resist Him you are going to suffer. It is damning if you reject His offices. You take the crutches out from under yourself and you fall down naturally. Let the Holy Spirit lead you. Follow the gleam.

II. Warnings against covetousness, vs. 13-21. Note vs. 1

1. The occasion of this warning.

The occasion is that there is a request for Jesus to step aside from His designated work, and the object of this warning is to show that the never-dying soul has eternal interests which have prior claims. Jesus shows this by a parable. Here you have an exhortation against covetousness. Jesus says the material things are not of prime interest.

III. Warnings against anxiety or care. vs. 22-34. Be not an

An English historian says that Queen Ann died of "thought." All her children died, her husband died, and she was left alone and brooded and pined away, and so it is said that she died of "thought."

The word "be anxious" or "be thoughtful" as the King James Version says, or "be careful" as Peter says, means to

be divided as to your mind. That is, *care* is simply a division of interests.

1. The exhortation is specific. Note 22b.

The reasons are here given. "For the life is more than food, and the body is more than raiment."

2. Examples.
   a. The ravens. v. 24.

The ravens come to be full grown ravens without care. They teach us that we will get enough to eat. Over against the specific warning to be not anxious for what you shall eat, stand the ravens.

   b. The lilies and the grass.

They are adorned and clothed without toil. They tell us that we will look just as we ought to look.

3. An examination of the careful reveals the following things:
   a. Reveals little faith. 28b.
   b. They are of a doubtful mind. v. 29.
   c. It reveals that they are worldly minded. v. 30.
4. The encouragement.
   a. The Father knows. v. 30.
   b. You will receive. v. 31.
5. Everlasting assurance. vs. 33 and 34.

IV. Warning ~~against~~ ~~languor~~. vs. 35-40. Watchfulness.

1. Hence, 35a teaches to be ready to run.
2. 35b teaches to be lit up for the journey.
3. Verses 36-41 teach watchful waiting.
   a. Watchful waiting for the bridegroom.
   b. Watchful waiting for the thief.

V. Warning ~~against~~ ~~special~~ ~~privilege~~. Verses 41 and following. Stewardship.

1. Faithfulness in performance of duty will bring reward to anybody.
2. Ignorance mitigates but does not do away with the punishment. There are no "favorites" in the Kingdom.

VI. Warning against persecutions. vs. 49-53.

"I came to cast fire upon the earth." This is the fire of trial. See v. 50. Jesus foresaw Calvary. There is a fiery trial awaiting each of us and the odds are against us. Those nearest us will test us most.

VII. Warning against ignorance of spiritual insight. vs. 54 and 59.

Repent or Lament

§ 96. The Galileans Slain by Pilate. Luke 13: 1-9.

As Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee moved among the people "some. . . . told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." At the Feast of Tabernacles Galileans, resentful of the appropriation of the temple tax by Pilate, had provoked the Roman Governor by "seditious words." The reverence of these Galileans had been outraged by the sacrifices offered daily for the Empire and the Emperor in the temple. The Roman garrison and pickets at the temple, for the purpose of maintaining order, was aggravating to the Galileans also. But the using of the temple tax to defray the expense of bringing a better supply of water into Jerusalem was apparently the immediate cause of the Galileans going to the government of Pilate that the work be discontinued. But Pilate, this time, answered them with clubs wielded by his soldiers in plain clothes, who beat down the mob. They even invaded the temple, where some poor pilgrims were killing their own sacrifices, and mingled their blood with the sacrifices. This, of course, polluted the House of God. Hence the stir and the spread and repetition of the outrageous story.

In Jesus' previous discourse (Luke 12: 54-59) He had referred to "the terrible national storm that was nearing." He here avails Himself of the incident of the slaughter of the Galileans by Pilate to say that all Galileans, yea all of the Jews, are about to suffer. Said He, "Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they have suffered these things? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." It would not do for Jesus' hearers to point to this incident, of the

Repent or Perish 1-5

Bear Fruit or be Cut Down 6-9

ruthless slaughter by Pilate, to prove that those that thus suffer have sinned greviously. All Galileans were sinners. A national doom was impending over back-slidden Israel.

Jesus cited another case to add weight to His prophecy of coming judgment upon Jerusalem. A tower, apparently on the top of Ophel, near the Fountain of the Virgin opposite Siloam, had fallen....and eighteen men had been buried beneath it; in the opinion of the people, as a judgment of God, for their having helped the sacrilegious undertaking of Pilate, who was bringing water to the Holy City.

Jesus saw in the hated Romans God's chastening rod for recalcitrant Jerusalem. Repentance was urged. "Except ye repent—except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish!" The alternatives were *national repentance* or *national perishing.*

And lest Israel would interpret the Master's words as suggestive of impatience on the part of the God of Israel, He spake the parable of the fig-tree. (6-9.)

To cut down a fig-tree or a palm or an olive-tree which yielded ever so little fruit was to deserve death from the hand of God, according to the popular notion, so valuable were these trees. Hence the tree of the parable must have been hopeless or its owner would never have given the order, "Cut it down." Of this tree, "regarded as the most fruitful of all trees" (Edersheim), when it bears, it was indignantly asked "Why does it also cumber the ground?" It is pointed out that this barren fig-tree would be a threefold disadvantage: "it would yield no fruit; it would fill valuable space, which a fruit-bearer might occupy; it would needlessly deteriorate the land."

In Joel 1 : 7 the fig-tree is emblematic of the Jewish nation. God had planted Israel in a favoured spot in His vineyard. But when "He came seeking fruit thereon and found none," He, in utter disappointment, bade His vinedresser the Messiah, "Cut it down." But He entreated, "Lord, let it alone this year also, till I dig about it and dung it," etc. One more chance for Jehovah's fig-tree, Israel. Would the favored tree respond to Messianic care? "If it bear....fruit, *well;* but if not, thou shalt cut it down."

History and Scripture relate how irresponsive was the specially cultivated fig-tree. "He came unto his own and his own received Him not." With one voice Israel cried out "We will not have this man reign over us." "Away with him!"; "Give us Barabbas." The seditionists preferred a seditionist. But sentence against an evil work was not executed speedily. All the Galileans and they of Jerusalem "perished," but only after divine patience had exhausted all of heaven's resources to woo and win, to redeem.

§ 97. The Woman Healed on a Sabbath. (Luke 13: 10-21.)

Made Straight

This section divides itself into two parts: (1) Jesus makes use of the Sabbath day, and (2) because He makes use of this day, the ruler of the synagogue criticizes Him. vs. 10-17.

Jesus was a real hero. Jesus made use of the Sabbath day. He conformed to the institutions of His day except when conformity would violate His well established principles.

I. Jesus makes use of the Sabbath day.

When our Saviour was on earth, He availed Himself of the institutions and occasions presented to Him, in order that He might do good. The synagogue was the Jewish institution which seems to have originated about the time of the captivity, when the Jews did not have access to the Temple. Jesus frequented the synagogues and as opportunity afforded, used them as a channel of blessing to the people who congregated. The Sabbath also was the *holy* day of the week in the time of Jesus just as our Lord's day, or Sunday, is now.

When Jesus was in one of these synagogues on a certain Sabbath, a woman, deformed, came. One verse of our Scripture states that she "had a spirit of infirmity," and another place says, "whom Satan hath bound." Satan had such control of this poor woman that she could not lift herself up. She is an example of so many in the world today who are bound down by Satan, whose business it is to lower men rather than lift them up.

When Jesus saw the woman, He recognized her condition, and, calling her to Himself, said, "Woman, thou art loosed from thy infirmity." The Son of God is aware of the physical, mental and spiritual infirmities of the world and His attitude toward them is the same as, twenty centuries ago, it was to this unfortunate creature. Jesus came to free men who had been bound and so He would loose us that we might live a happy and successful physical life, that our minds might be unhampered, and our spirits might be *buoyant* in the Lord.

Not only did He speak to this woman, but He laid His hands upon her and at once she straightened up, and glorified God. In this incident we note His coming into contact with this woman who needed His power, just as today He longs to come into contact with all need. His presence changed her completely and immediately, and so His touch in the life makes for a quick transformation. She did not thank Him, according to the narrative, but glorified God, thus recognizing that what He did was done in the power of God.

As we view this incident, we note that Christ was so practical with His power that He healed the needy person while He had opportunity. Is this not a good lesson for the ministers of the Lord today? We should not be so upon our dignity that we are unwilling to minister directly and practically in time of need. Opportunities seldom, if ever, repeat themselves. When we see the soul bowed, we should aim to get that soul in contact with Christ at once. If the needy world today would come in contact with the Christ of power, what a transformation there would be and how glad we would be. Ere long He will come in Person to straighten out this world so bent and bowed with infirmities and sin.

II. The Ruler of the Synagogue criticizes Jesus' work on the Sabbath.

Evidently the bent woman walking in an erect position and glorifying God, directed the attention of the crowd. The ruler of the synagogue, being jealous of his position, became indignant with Jesus. He criticized Him for having healed on the Sabbath day. He classified what Jesus

had done *as work,* and told Jesus that all work should be done on six days. He told the woman and all others that they should come for healing on any day of the week but the Sabbath. In all this evidently he acted quite foolishly. How *narrow* he was. Jesus did not do this as work, neither would Jesus be bound by the traditions of the synagogue. At once the Lord pointed out to him that he was hypocritical. He was not going according to his own best judgment in the matter, but simply said what he did because of his anger.

Our Lord pointed out to this unwise Ruler of the synagogue that on the Sabbath day men are merciful with animals. They do not permit the ox and the ass to stand in the stall on the Sabbath day without water, but they lead them forth to the watering place. The Ruler of the synagogue knew of these works and doubtless approved, and had he but thought honestly, he could not have condemned Jesus for being merciful to a human being that had been bound for eighteen years.

Jesus' question as to whether or not this daughter of Abraham should have been loosed, caused His adversaries to be ashamed. They had good reason to be ashamed since their criticism of Christ was unjust and their reason childish. It has ever been so when men have taken the issue with the Son of God. Jesus was the Truth and so could not do otherwise than what was consistent with the truth. As He is seen in the perspective of nineteen centuries men declare that He was a *miracle.* Yet there are those today who put their own judgment up against His clear teaching. Is it any wonder that they soon come to shame? But the people round about rejoiced in the glorious things which He did. If the people of our day could only see Jesus working, they would believe. Many of them do see and do believe. Let us give Him the opportunity to work that many may believe. We note from this section of the Scriptures that when we fulfil our ministry as faithful servants of the Lord, we will help those who need help but we are certain to incur the enmity and criticism of a certain professional class that lacks the power of God. Let us not be daunted in our work, but boldly strike out for the right and in the right, and so fulfill our mission.

§ 98. The Question Whether Few Are Saved. (Luke 13: 22-30.)

Christ is travelling from Galilee to Jerusalem, which is in Judea, and He evidently crosses over into Perea and crosses back again. The places are not named along the way, but apparently He took His time and went rather leisurely on this journey. As He goes to these cities and villages, a certain one says to Him "Lord, are they few that be saved?" You notice that this question, though asked by one, was answered to many, Jesus said unto *them*. Probably the questioner was curious, and Jesus, we can fancy, turns to answer the question, but takes the opportunity to tell the people something which He thinks they ought to have.

Notice what He gives to them. "Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in and shall not be able." Doubtless here you have the Messianic Kingdom under the figure of the palace, and into this palace, of course, men ought to come. The master of the house is probably seated at the head of his banqueting table and there are two entrances. There is the magnificent portal, the front entrance, and then there is the narrow door, or a postern gate, and Jesus bids them enter in by *striving,* through the narrow door, or postern gate. *We* are exhorted to do this. The reference as we understand it is to Christ, who is the only way. Christ is the door, and if you would come into this magnificent palace of the Lord, you must come by means of the narrow door and you must strive to enter into it. There must be *humiliation.* You must tread the way that Jesus trod. This speaks of the humiliation of Christ, and so this gate represents the lowly Messiah as the way, the truth and the life.

He says further that there are those that shall seek to enter and shall not be able. Many authorities bring in the word "once" in verse 24. It probably is that when once the master of this house had closed the door. For there will come a time when the door will be shut, and prophetically speaking, there are those who will come, but will not be answered. They will seek in vain. Now, of course, the Jews had their notion of entering in—through their own

way, their own ritual, and their own sacrifices, but that was not *the way*. Christ became the door of entering, and when they rejected Him they rejected the entrance.

They will petition Him. These words are simply as words of one rejecting those who strive to come in. Then there shall be wailing or weeping, which expresses despair, and gnashing, which expresses rage.

Those who rejected Him and sought to come in by their own way are thieves and robbers. He is the door, the postern gate, and they were not going to enter that way and hence there will be those who will supplant them, from the east and west, and from the north and south, and they will get the place with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

"And behold," the startling thing is, "there are last which shall be first and there are first which shall be last." Take Galatians and Romans as commentary on this particular section.

§ 99. Reply to the Warning Against Herod. (Luke 13: 31-35).

This to me is one of the most colorful incidents in the New Testament. Herod Antipas (ruler of Perea) here is presented in a disturbed state of mind. "Herod would fain kill thee." Doubtless Herod's disturbance was due to the fact that the professed Messiah was in Herod's dominion, and he had been guilty of killing John the Baptist, one prophet, and was not eager to kill Jesus, another prophet. However, he was not willing to have the disturbance in his kingdom either.

We are challenged by the solicitude of the Pharisees. "In that hour." Why were they so solicitous for the safety of Christ? See Mark 3 : 6. There you have a warning against the Herodians and Pharisees. The Pharisees were eager to get rid of Him from their own religious standpoint, and get Him into Judea where He would be under the control of the Jews.

Now Jesus calls Herod a fox, v. 32. Jesus is here accusing Herod of being an intriguer—being foxy.

What did He tell them? "Tell them I have certain things to do—cast out devils and cure people." "The third day I

am perfected." Probably means "I am finished," or maybe "I am here for just a short time."

Notice further that He says, "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." That is probably irony, for He goes on to say, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto thee!" Just as though that is what Jerusalem was in the habit of doing. That is rather an accusation. It isn't true that it would kill all the prophets, but in general Jerusalem has been in the prophet-killing business. Jerusalem had a monopoly on killing prophets.

"How often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and *ye would not.*" This is an apostrophe—addressing them as though they were present. (Jesus was not in Jerusalem.) A great crowd was always following Jesus, and in this crowd there were Jews who would convey this message to Jerusalem. Jesus knew that He was soon to leave the earth, and He was solicitous for His own people. He was sent unto the Jews.

Said Jesus, "How often *would* I"...."And ye *would* not." "Thelo" (Greek), "I wish," is used. Although Jesus *would* and as ye *would not,* then it is not done. Evidently this Scripture teaches that there is a possibility of rejecting the offers of mercy and grace and going counter to Jesus' will.

"Behold, your house is left unto you *desolate.*" "Desolate" is "eremos" (Greek)—desert. Leave desolate out and see what you have. Imagine what that means for them. They did not know that they were turning down their best. When France drove out the Huguenots, she tapped her artery and let flow her life blood. When Christ was rejected by the Jews they were left alone. He says, "Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.' "

Jesus again used this as an occasion to teach them. Every once in a while someone said something to Him and He used these opportunities to declare some particular truth.

§ 100. Discourse At a Chief Pharisee's Table. (Luke 14: 1-24.)

One of the marvels of the teaching of Christ was the emphasis He put upon certain things which were either despised or ignored by other great teachers. Jesus, being omniscient, surveyed the whole field of knowledge and knew just what to stress. He prized humility. He exalted the lowly. With exquisite taste He appreciated the delicate touches in life.

Gentile standards and ways would not do for His followers. He had left the glory to take His place in this poor, sin-defiled world and finally to die the death of the ignominious cross. Thus He demonstrated the possibility of one's humbling himself.

I. "Before Honor Goeth Humility." Vs. 7-11.

Jesus' parables were taken from life. He observed how selfishly guests chose out the chief places at a table. This "was against" His nature. He could not be silent. True it is that there are times when "silence is golden," yet evils should be portrayed in forceful language. Otherwise wickedness may stalk about disguised and unobserved.

Jesus was specific in His instructions. He told those invited to a wedding not to sit down in the best seats but to take the lowest places. Guests may come in who in the estimation of the host are more deserving of the better seats. Then he will move the selfish, ambitious guest from his comfortable and honorable seat to a lower one, much to the humiliation of the man forced to step down. Jesus pointed out that if men would only take the low seats there was a likelihood of their being exalted by the host. Then He laid down a principle as follows: "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

We can easily imagine that Jesus is still observing the greed and selfishness of men on earth. Ambition causes them to project their own personalities. They seek to gratify their own desires. They enjoy hearing their own voices and especially do they vie to have a prominent place in newspaper accounts. Now there is a legitimate interest

that one should have in what his own name stands for, stands over, and stands under, but I confess that I believe that if Christ were to come to earth in person and dictate as to *who should be who and where and what* He would shake men up a bit. Some that through "wire-pulling" and propaganda against their brothers have climbed to a throne over the bodies of their more worthy, but less pugnacious fellows, would be brought down to dust and ashes; whereas some lowly, sweet, Christlike, and really strong saints would be put up. Well, why be restless about it? No need to be irritated. The Judgment Seat of Christ is not far distant. Then all will be adjusted by Him, the Great Judge.

Then He who saw the *widow's two mites, the woman who anointed His feet, and the loving devotion of Mary,* will not fail to recognize the true worth and humility of spirit. May God give His children grace to get down low.

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." It is true also that he that humbles himself will not be humiliated. All others will.

Much of the vying for place and prominence is due to over-estimating self. We are all too likely to *think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.*

But what good is a big chair if one cannot fill it? It is just as uncomfortable as for the little boy to sit in his father's chair and have his little feet dangle above the floor. On the other hand, when one occupies a position for which he is qualified and those about him recognize him as being big enough for the place, how happy is the situation. The office should seek the man and not the man the office.

II. Certainty of Reward for the Generous. Vs. 12-14.

After Jesus had discoursed on taking the lowest seat He took occasion to instruct His host on the matter of issuing invitations for feasts. His advice was to invite those who could not invite in return. Christ taught that the friends, brethren, and kinsmen, and rich neighbors should be passed by and the poor, the maimed, and the lame and the blind be invited. The proffered reward for this unusual procedure is neatly expressed as follows, "And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Jesus

advocated ministering to those who cannot help themselves and assured us that in compensation for this we shall be rewarded at the resurrection of the just. This is not only a challenge to us to aid the unfortunate of society, but a challenge to our faith in the resurrection of the just and its attendant judgment.

If this principle were rigidly adhered to there would be fewer feasts, but just as happy people in the world. One can hardly believe that our Master would discourage eating and drinking with our immediate friends, but He longed for a generosity and hospitality that would indicate our sympathies extended beyond our own limited groups and inner circles of favorites.

How beautiful it is when what Jesus suggests in these practical matters is believed and done.

§ 101. Discourse on Counting the Cost. Luke 14: 25-35.

Christ told the multitudes that discipleship meant renouncement of all. "Hateth" means "loveth less." (cf. Gen. 29: 30, 31; Mat. 10: 37.) "His own life" also (v. 26) shows that selfishness is incompatible with following the Master. Hence He advises them to be as *prudent* as the builder who "sits down and counts the cost" or the warrior who "sits down and counsels." The savour of the salt of Christianity is renouncement of all. Sacrifice is the seasoning of salvation and service. He counsels that "A reserved attitude is less to be criticized than open profession followed by declension."

§ 102. The Three Parables of Grace. Luke 15.

These were spoken to reply to the charge of the Pharisees and scribes: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Herein does the "Good Shepherd" declare that God in Christ became a Seeking Saviour. The two prominent features of each parable are (a) "the lost" and (b) *the joy upon finding.* The sheep, the coin and the son are all lost. So the race is lost. Some like the sheep are so lost that they realize it, yet could never find their way

home to the bosom of the Great Shepherd. The lost sheep bespeaks the need of a real Shepherd. The son suggests how there is need of repentance on the part of the sinner.

The Prodigal Son. This parable has been called *"the crown and pearl* of all Christ's parables." Horace Greeley said, "If there could be only one page in the Bible, I should choose that the single page should contain this parable." But it is well for us to note that this parable sets forth only one phase of redemption and that the divine work in redemption, the suffering and the toil are abundantly illustrated in the going out of the shepherd for the lost sheep and the searching by the woman for the lost coin.—*Abbott.* Here we have set forth the sinner's plight and acceptance after a wilful straying.

When the Shepherd finds the sheep "he layeth it upon his shoulders, rejoicing." Then he calls together his friends to celebrate the finding. When the woman by diligent seeking has found the lost coin she calleth together her lady friends and neighbors to rejoice over the fact that the lost coin has been found. When the son, lost by leaving the parental roof and renouncing the father's guidance, has returned and been received by the running, rejoicing father, there is the banquet to celebrate.

The elder brother, like the Pharisee, is on the ground, just, by contrast, to emphasize the forgiveness and gladness of the Father's heart. At the close of the Parable of the Lost Sheep, Jesus said, "There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." (v. 7.) At the close of that of the Lost Coin Jesus said, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (v. 10.)

At the close of the Parable of the Prodigal Son no such statement is made. Why repeat what is so evident? As the Father's heart was happy over the son's safety, so God's great heart rejoices over the sinner's return.

Outline on The Parable of the Prodigal

Jesus' experience with the publican and servant on the one hand and that of the Pharisees and scribes on the other

provide the occasion for these parables. As has been said before, the point of the parables is the rejoicing over the lost when it is found. Evidently this rejoicing was occasioned because of the value of that which was found.

Considerations.

1. The Prodigal.
   (a) wantonness, v. 12.
   (b) wealth, v. 12b.
   (c) waste, v. 13.
   (d) want, v. 14.
   (e) work, v. 15.
   (f) woe, v. 16.
   (g) will, v. 18.
2. The Father.
   (h) welcome, vs. 20-24.
   Note the space given to the welcome in Luke's human gospel.
3. The Elder Son.
   (i) work, vs. 25, 29.
   (j) wrath, v. 28.

The elder son of the parable stands for the Pharisees and scribes. He represents faithfulness as is seen by the fact that he was serving his father in the field, but he sulked when he might have enjoyed the banquet. So the Pharisees and scribes could not appreciate the forgiving grace of Christ who represents the Father's attitude toward the prodigals of the race.

§ 103. Two Parables of Warning. Luke, 16.

The parable of the Unjust Steward teaches how men use money as a means of making friends. They put others under obligations to themselves by a wise use of money. Here the steward got the approval of his lord who was about to accuse him of wasting. "For sons of this world are wiser than sons of light." The point is to appreciate values. Unjust steward began to value commodities. We should value the "good" in spiritual and eternal things. This lord saw a valuable prudence in his steward. The

Master bids us look to the future, to invest in eternal securities. Our goods should be laid on the altar that we may have "an abundant entrance." Trust not in riches but use them as means to a desired end. If mammon, greed, be your God, then Jehovah will be slighted.

Our earthly goods should be so dispensed that souls through its use will be saved. Money that is given to missions will mean the salvation of souls who one day will receive us into "eternal tabernacles." So this parable teaches that the best use that we can make of our money is to use it so that others may be brought to Christ.

This teaching grated on the ears of the lucre-loving, hypocritical Pharisees who lacked that dash that comes from genuineness. So Jesus told them that they were "behind the times." Their religion was an anachronism. They should "violently" enter into it "the Kingdom of God." This is consistent with law-keeping as verse 17 shows. This *reality* will do away with looseness in morals and matrimonial matters.

Then follows the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The rich man failed to "make friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness" so when he "failed" there was no one to receive him into eternal tabernacles." "This parable is not an allegory, like the parable of the sower, but is rather a representative or illustrative story, like that of the good Samaritan, or unjust steward, in which 'every particular of each one of them may have been historical.'"—*Sadler.* The circumstances of the story must be exactly according to facts, and picture out the real state of things, as Christ always does in His parables. As from the parables of the sheep, the steward, the wedding-feast, we may learn the customs of that day, so from this parable we may learn the truth about the other world and its relation to this. It is the parting of the veil that hides the other world from this, giving a momentary glimpse of the realities beyond.—*Peloubet.* As these quotations indicate, the Lord Jesus by this parable lets us know of the life beyond the grave, and the results of failing to use our earthly possessions for His glory.

§ 104. Concerning Forgiveness and Faith. Luke 17: 1-10.

This section by vivid illustrative language portrays the Christian life in the ideal as a life of (a) blamelessness—no occasion of stumbling given (1, 2); (b) forgiveness—even seven times in a day (4); (c) faithfulness as (1) belief in God's power and (2) fidelity in His service (5-10).

§ 105. The Raising of Lazarus. John 11: 1-46.

The story of the raising of Lazarus is one which makes evident the power of our Lord over death and thus manifests his heroic nature, but it also shows him to be tender and sympathetic with those whom he loves, and portrays him to be perfectly human. As Lazarus grew ill Mary and Martha naturally thought of Jesus who had been their guest and friend. The close relationship of Jesus and Lazarus is expressed in the message sent to Christ. "Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick." Jesus receiving the message seemed to draw on His divine knowledge when he said, "This sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." Thus he predicted the resurrection of Lazarus. But the particular statement, "This sickness is not unto death" (v. 4) seems difficult in view of the fact that Lazarus did die, but the very natural explanation is that Jesus meant that the sickness of Lazarus was not for the purpose of death but rather that God might be glorified through His Son being glorified in bringing the dead man to life.

A superficial reader would find difficulty in this narrative in reading that Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus and then reading that when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick he stayed where He was two days. He seemed to be in no hurry. It is as though He was depending on those whom He loved to afford Him the opportunity of doing a great work by which God might be glorified. But finally He would start into Judea, though the disciples would have prevented Him for fear of the Jews, but He was walking in the light and feared not.

Then, knowing that Lazarus had died, He said, "Our

friend Lazarus has fallen asleep," etc. The disciples did not realize that He spoke of Lazarus' death, so Jesus used the strong expression, "Lazarus is dead," and said plainly, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe." So though Jesus loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus, and naturally would have spared them any grief, yet He permitted Lazarus to die that faith might be implanted in the hearts of the disciples. Upon arriving at Bethany near Jerusalem Jesus found many Jews consoling Martha and Mary. Martha in her accustomed earnestness hastened down, greeting Jesus with the words which must have seemed to him like an accusation of remissness, "If thou hadst been here my brother had not died." Yet, hope and faith tried to illuminate the darkness of her sorrow and she added, "Even now I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Then Jesus took pains to explain to Martha that not in the distant future but at that very time He was the resurrection and the life. Martha signifies her faith that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God.

Then Martha calls Mary, her sister, who in keeping with her character "sat still in the house." Mary, obeying the call of the Master, rose quickly and went unto Him, followed by the Jews who were sorrowing with her. Mary who so much loved to sit at Jesus' feet, at this time "fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." We can forgive the sisters for believing that the Lord should have come to their home earlier and we are sure the Master did not chide Mary but rather "groaned in spirit and was troubled." We interpret this as meaning that Jesus deeply sympathized with Mary. Edersheim, quoting Canon Westcott, observes, "The miracles of the Lord were not wrought by a simple word of power but that in the Master was the element of sympathy unto them. He took away the sicknesses and diseases of men in some sense by taking them unto Himself." This famous student of the life of Christ here speaks of "that theanthropic fellow-suffering which was both vicarious and redemptive."

Christ was perfectly human and called upon His heavenly

power to aid His friends. His question was, "Where have they laid him?" Here is the record of the Master's tears, "Jesus wept." The Jews there present knew that Jesus loved him and even they were ready to believe that He who had "opened the eyes of him that was blind, could have caused that this man should not have died." Then follows in verse 38 a statement that Jesus "groaning in himself, cometh to the tomb." Doubtless this groaning was the expression of a deep feeling. He sympathized with the grief of his friends and probably resented the unbelief that was implied in the words that Jesus could have caused this man not to die, but stopped there. Jesus intended to demonstrate that He could bring this man to life. Then follows the narrative how that they were bidden to take away the stone and then again the words of the protesting Martha. Jesus "lifted up his eyes" and prayed to the Father and then cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." Lazarus did come forth and the result was that many of the Jews that were present believed, but some went to the Pharisees, the avowed enemies of Christ.

There are in this raising of Lazarus some practical lessons:

(a) He was dead, as all are spiritually dead until quickened. Eph. 2:1.

(b) Jesus spake and he had life. So we receive spiritual life. John 10:10.

(c) He was bound hand and foot and voice. That is, he could not work, walk nor speak. We can imagine the result had he continued in that bound state. He surely would have gained no strength but would have atrophied.

(d) Jesus' exhortation was "loose him and let him go." How important this exhortation that he may work for and fellowship with his sisters and be a blessing to his fellows. So we must not forget the application that when we have received spiritual life then we must have the napkin taken from off the mouth that we might talk for the Master and that our hands may be unbound that we may work for the Master.

§ 106. The Withdrawal to Ephraim. John 11: 47-54.

The report of the raising of Lazarus caused the Pharisees to gather a council and ask themselves the question, "What do we?" and to make the statement, "This man doeth many miracles." The Pharisees realized that if Jesus succeeded their religious position was lost. Said they, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him." They felt that the Romans would come and do away with the Jewish leaders if this Jesus continued by his matchless works and words to cast a reflection on their outworn religion. But there spoke from their midst one Caiaphas who was high priest that year and said that they should know "that one should die for the people that the whole nation perish not." As high priest "he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation," and John interpreting this adds "and not for that nation only, but that also he might gather together into one the people of God that are scattered abroad." So here we see the malignity of the Pharisees, the worldly wisdom of the high priest of the Jews and God's great purpose that the crucifixion of Jesus through the Pharisees would mean the gathering together of the children of God that were scattered abroad throughout the whole world. Then and there "they took counsel that they might put him to death." Therefore Jesus withdrew from the Jews to a city of Ephraim with the disciples.

§ 107. The Ten Lepers. Luke 17: 11-19.

The healing of the ten lepers, but the return of only one glorifying God and giving thanks, and the significant question of Jesus, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" and "They were not found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger,"—all this teaches us

1. The grace of gratitude, and
2. The baseness of ingratitude.

They were all cleansed as they went but one and only one returned to give thanks. The following is a general though inexact statement of something that really occurred which indicates the ingratitude of the race. A boat was wrecked

on one of the Great Lakes. An experienced swimmer present plunged into the cold water and hauled in one after another until he saved thirty lives. He was unable to complete his task without being given personal attention through rubbings, but as soon as he had recovered from the cold and the exhaustion incident to the perilous work, he would plunge into the water again. Thus he hazarded his life to save the thirty. Dr. Torrey, learning of this, spoke of it frequently in his evangelistic addresses. One day in California, Dr. Torrey was telling the story when an old man rose and said he was the man who was the subject of the story. Whereupon Dr. Torrey asked him to tell what in his judgment was the most interesting part about it, and he replied that it was the fact that not one of the thirty thanked him for saving their lives.

This reminds us of Shakespeare's well-known lines in *As You Like It:*

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

"Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not."

§ 108. The Coming of the Kingdom. Luke 17: 20-18: 8.

The Pharisees keep hounding the Master. Here they are inquiring as to the time of the coming of the kingdom of God. Jesus with infinite patience and characteristic courtesy takes time to reply. His statements' summaries are as follows:

1. The kingdom will not come so that it can be seen by them. Jesus here referred to the invisibility of the kingdom. "The kingdom of God is within you," or to use that other possible translation, "in the midst of you." At that very time the Pharisees were unable to observe the king before their eyes and how could they be expected to appreciate the

presence of the kingdom? So regardless of our belief in the sudden coming of the kingdom of Christ on earth, we must all believe in this kingdom that cometh not with observation; this is near and spiritual and present.

2. There will come a day when the visible kingdom will be upon the earth before men are aware of it. It will be as a flash of lightning (v. 24).

3. In a particular sense this dispensation of grace is a manifestation of the kingdom of God. It is "one of the days of the Son of man" (v. 22).

4. The kingdom is not confined to any particular place. So we should not heed those who say, "Lo, there!" or "Lo, here!" (v. 23).

5. The coming of the kingdom will be revealed suddenly as verses 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 indicate. The antediluvians could not realize that there would be the sudden closing of the ark and they would be exposed to the flood. Compare Eccles. 8:11 and 1 Thes. 5.

6. The laws and principles of the kingdom will be unrelenting (vs. 32, 35). As Lot's wife lost her life so some will be left and lost when the kingdom comes in. To the particular inquiry as to where those would be taken that were caught up, Jesus replies, "Where the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together." The evident meaning of which is that Christ will, as a magnet, attract to Himself those who are prepared to go to Him at the rapture. Just as vultures are attracted to a carcass, so those will be attracted to Him who comes in the clouds for them.

Then Jesus as usual began to teach a very important lesson by a parable. The object of the parable is stated definitely "that men ought always to pray and not to faint." The thought of the coming of the kingdom, the separating of the righteous from the wicked, should not hinder them in their devotions, but should rather strengthen them to fervency and faithfulness in prayer. The point in the parable is that if this unspeakably callous and inhuman judge was compelled to yield to the widow's constant entreaty, surely the Lord whose ear is ever open to our cry and who loves us as a heavenly Father, surely the Lord, our God, hears and will stretch forth his arm to avenge his children

who pray to him, and especially so because "he is long suffering for them" (v. 7).

Then Jesus raises the question, "When the Son of man cometh shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" The reference is here evidently made to the clearly well defined body of truth that has to do with kingdom teaching.

§ 109. The Pharisee and the Publican. Luke 18: 9-14.

This simple parable portrays to us two distinct and definite types of men with respect to prayer. The Pharisee, self-sufficient in his own religious regard, and highly esteeming himself by his very posture ("stood and prayed") and aloofness ("with himself") is the quintessence of impenitence even in his attitude and form of prayer. As he says himself, he has nothing to confess and so simply thanks God that he is "not as the rest of men," and he seems especially glad that he is not as the publican, whose humiliation is evidenced by his attitude. The publican lacks the brazen, self-complacent religiosity of the Pharisee and so in most humble mien stood afar off with downcast eyes and he smote upon his breast uttering the penitential, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

We hardly think it is necessary to *interject* that which all believe, that it is good to be moral. The lesson of this parable, clearly stated, is that man should not trust in himself and set all others at naught, for of the publican it is said, "This man went down to his house justified, rather than the other." Self-exaltation is followed by humiliation and humiliation by exaltation.

§ 110. Concerning Divorce. Mat. 19: 3-12; Mark 10: 2-12.

As Jesus in His Perean ministry approached Jerusalem the Pharisees gave Him no rest. They were ever asking him questions, "tempting him." They had decided that He should die according to the advice of Caiaphas in order to save the Jewish nation, but their consciences doubtless troubled them and so they are compelled to "make a case against him." So they would discuss divorce with Him.

I. *The question.* Matthew states that they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Mark has simply, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" That was the question. Should divorce be granted?

II. *The answer.* Jesus takes some pains in discussing this subject, yet He is very definite and direct in His statements.

1. He showed that male and female are *complementary* (vs. 4, 5), since God had from the beginning made them male and female, and since Jesus evidently thought of one man for one woman, it was very important that a man should leave his father and mother for his wife since the two became one flesh. Jesus here not only insisted upon the indissolubility of marriage, but also hinted at the physical and mental interdependence of man and woman.

2. Marriage is a divine institution (v. 6). Since God has joined why should man undo what God has done? So Christ insists that the ideal should become the actual.

3. Divorce is a man-made alternative (vs. 7, 8). When the Pharisees cited Moses they felt they had gained their point, but they missed it when they said, "Moses *commanded* to give a bill of divorcement." Jesus would not allow that Moses had commanded but explained, "Moses for your hardness of heart *suffered* you to put away your wives but from the beginning it was not so." What Moses did was to give permission to them because of their obtuse, insensate hearts.

4. Christ's ground for divorce (v. 9). Jesus did make one exception and that was *fornication.* He also pointed out that the man who divorces his wife and marries again would not simply himself be guilty of adultery but make another man liable to adultery, by divorcing this woman who would likely marry again.

5. Those able not to marry (vs. 10-12). The Pharisees were silenced temporarily but the eager disciples went in search of further truth. Their concern was as to whether it is advisable for one to marry since a divorce is wrong except in one case and since incompatibility, etc., is likely to be present. But then Jesus pointed out that not all men are able not to marry. He implied that single life would be greater hardship for most men than unsatisfactory mar-

riage. Then He spoke of those three classes of eunuchs; the highest in character being those who have "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." Then he advised, "He that is able to receive it let him receive it." The disciples had been instructed and if none from their group were able to receive the same, certainly Paul was one of the characters whose heart was so enthusiastic for the spreading of the Gospel that he was able to receive it. Cf. 1 Cor. 7.

§ 111. Christ Blessing Little Children. Mat. 19: 13-15; Mark 10: 13-16; Luke 18: 15-17.

The incident of Christ blessing little children "probably occurred in the same house where the disciples had questioned Christ about His teaching on the divinely sacred institution of marriage."—*Edersheim.* This instruction relative to the children aptly follows that on marriage. This is a scene expressing the Master's sweetness, gentleness and tenderness. The above-named author believes that the Christ who blesses the children is entirely unlike what Jewish legend would have invented for its Messiah. But from what we have learned of Jesus we can surely have imagined that the Jewish mothers would have brought their children to Him. They knew of His holiness and were eager to have His hand laid upon the heads of their children in blessing. But lo, "the disciples rebuked them." The word for rebuke here implies that they did not convince them, however, that they should not bring their children to Jesus. But Jesus stood up for the mothers and children.

His "suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not" has been used countless times as myriads of infants have been presented to the Lord by devoted parents. For says He, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." And Mark is more explicit than Matthew for Mark expresses that the kingdom of heaven shall be received as a little child would receive it. Jesus clearly asserts "that there need be no intellectual greatness." The humble, even the feeble-minded, may receive the kingdom. So Jesus "took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them."

Surely as He fondly folded these babes to His bosom He was thinking not simply of them, but He was praying that His disciples would be "followers of God, as dear children."

§ 112. The Rich Young Ruler. Mat. 19: 16-20: 16; Mark 10: 17-31; Luke 18: 18-30.

The interview between this one and the Master is fraught with interest. It has been pointed out that the questioner in asking, "What good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?" displays great ignorance, since we do not do anything to inherit, but if one is interested in eternal life, we could excuse him for not being careful in his selection of terms. The question asked by Jesus, "Why callest thou me good?" and his statement, "None is good save one, God," have been taken to prove that Jesus here did not profess to be God. It would seem that Matthew's Gospel which has, "Why asketh thou me concerning that which is good?" would remove any difficulty. The Cambridge Bible takes the position that whichever reading we prefer, the truth of our Lord's answer is to cause reflection. Jesus is saying, "In a single breath thou hast twice used the word *good;* think what *good* really means. Am I then the One good?" Jesus refuses the title "Good Master" and leads the inquirer to reflect upon the only One who could be called good in the true sense. This might be interpreted to assert that Jesus is challenging this young man to recognize that He is God; if God is the only good one and if Jesus is given that title then the logic is inevitable; He is God. The Greek word used (agathos) expresses the absolute idea of moral goodness.

The Lord answers the young man by telling him to keep the commandments and cites him the second table of the decalogue which refers to his duty to man. The young man asserted, "All these things I have observed." Probably he had done so according to his estimate of things. Then he inquired as to what he yet lacked. What he really lacked was, of course, the riches of approbation of heaven. Rich he was in things earthly but poor in things heavenly. Yet pathetic it is that he was unwilling to exchange the riches

of earth for those of heaven, and he left the Master with sorrowful heart.

Then Jesus took occasion from this experience with the young man to point out the difficulty of the rich being saved and referred to the camel going through the needle's eye. This expression was familiar to the Jews of Jesus' day and is an exaggeration in keeping with eastern style. The Cambridge Bible states that it is unnecessary to say that "camel" is a word meaning "rope," or that the eye of the needle is a so-called gate. What Jesus says is that for the rich man to be saved is a difficulty so great as to be almost impossible. "Yet with God all things are possible."

Peter, the usual spokesman, being reminded of the poverty of the disciples, said, "Lo, we have left all and followed thee. What then shall we have?" Whereupon Jesus reminded him that "they which have followed me in the regeneration . . . shall sit upon twelve thrones," etc. Then the Master went on to state that any one who had forsaken any beloved person or object should receive one hundredfold. Those that would be faithful to the Master in His restoration (regeneration) would be amply rewarded. Then in Mat. 20: 1, Jesus begins a parable which was an answer to Peter's question of Mat. 19: 27. Jesus had said, "but many shall be last that are first, and first that are last." He evidently meant that those who were poor on earth should be rich in heaven, and vice versa. He certainly implied that their rewards of fidelity would be ample and that He as King of the Kingdom was fully authorized to reward the faithful.

So the parable of the householder becomes very clear. An agreement was made with the laborers that came early in the morning. A penny a day was the wage. Then others were brought in at the third hour, still others at the sixth, and at the ninth, and others at the eleventh. But when the day was done each one received a penny regardless of the time he had labored. The fact that all received the same but that some had worked during the heat of the day while others had labored just during the cool evening hour, irritated those who began early. But the householder said to the one that complained, "Friend, I did you no wrong.

Didst thou not agree with me for a penny?" That is justice. The householder reminded the complaining one that it was allowable for him to do what he chose with his own. Said he, "Is thine eye evil because I am good?" This means, "Are you envious because I am just?" What the Master intended to emphasize is that *time* is not the only element of service. Thus Jesus taught that rewards would not be only in proportion to labor rendered but also according to the generosity of the Lord, Himself.

§ 113. Christ Foretells His Crucifixion. Mat. 20: 17-19; Mark 10: 32-34; Luke 18: 31-34.

Jesus for some time had said nothing of His coming death but as he approaches Jerusalem He is reminded of it. We can surely see that it was important for the disciples to consider the idea of crucifixion lest the hope of rewards should cause them to be totally unprepared for the event. Jesus' crucifixion was at hand and He wanted the disciples to be ready for it.

§ 114. The Ambition of James and John. Mat. 20: 20-28; Mark 10: 35-45.

Here we have the ambition of a fond mother for her sons. It seems as though even James and John did not seriously consider the prophecy of the crucifixion. So when their mother asked the Master that they might have favored places in His Kingdom, Jesus said, "You know not what you ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" Jesus then prepared to give them a lesson on the importance of humility in service. Let us consider this section under a brief outline:

I. Wrong roads to greatness.

1. The way of a whim. Mat. 20: 20-21. This mother was simply talking according to her own heart and her ambition for her boys. No one can ever achieve greatness according to Christ's standards simply through selfish ambition.

2. The way of self-sufficiency (20: 22). To Jesus' question they replied, "We are able." They overestimated them-

selves and so expressed an over confidence. It requires more than confidence in one's powers to really be great in the eyes of God.

3. The way disapproved of by the majority of the good, sane and reliable (20:24). The ten hearing the confident assertion of the two were indignant, and we believe rightly so. When one's ambitions do not agree with the sanctified common sense of the majority he should begin to question his aims. We are here reminded of Rehoboam's refusal of the counsel of the old man and heeding that of the young. 2 Kings 12.

II. Right roads to greatness.

1. The way opposite to that taken by the rulers of the Gentiles. Jesus points out how they "lord it over" and "exercise authority over" those under them. They aim to subdue as the expression "exercise dominion" indicates. 1 Peter 5:3 condemns this.

2. The way the saints have trod (20:26, 27). According to this the great one is the "minister" or servant. The minister (diakonos) (from which we get "deacon" and "dean") is the humblest ecclesiastical office, whereas the servant (doulos, slave) is the humblest domestic. Now the really great servants of mankind, as well as the saints of the past, have been ministers and servants. Herein is pointed out the proper way to receive one's D.D.

3. The way the Master trod (20:28). He came to serve even to the point of giving His life to redeem many.

§ 115. The Blind Man Near Jericho. Mat. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43.

The jostling, noisy crowd could not drown the piteous pleadings of needy men when these were directed to the ears that are ever open to the cry of distress. His were the ears that heard Israel's piercing cry in Egypt, provoked by the merciless lash of the cruel taskmasters.

Even the shadow of the approaching cross could not obscure from His penetrating gaze those that were not enjoying the blessing of sight.

Compassionate He pushed through the heartless multitude

until He could lay that hand, soon to be pierced with nails, on those, until then, useless eyes. And lo! at once the sight was restored and He had two more enthusiastic followers.

§ 116. The Visit to Zacchæus. Luke 19: 1-10.

Jesus' dealing with Zacchæus is outstanding because on that occasion he stated his purpose of coming to this earth. The key verse of Luke expresses that "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." The account is a vivid portrayal of what occurred. Zacchæus, a rich chief publican, little of stature, being eager to see Jesus, ran on ahead of the crowd that awaited his approach and climbed into a tree. When Jesus came to the place where Zacchæus was he looked up and bade him come down, clearly stating "for today I must abide at thy house." Zacchæus did as he was bidden, and with joy received Jesus.

The meeting of Jesus with this well-known publican provoked the criticism of the Jews. Said they, "He is gone in to lodge with a man who is a sinner." On the other hand, Zacchæus availed himself of the presence of the Saviour and said that he would give half of his goods to the poor and restore fourfold where he had wrongfully exacted. Whereupon Jesus said, "Today is salvation come to this house, for as much as he is also a son of Abraham." Here we see Jesus manifesting His broad sympathies for humanity. He is void of any narrow, racial provincialism. He is a Saviour of all lost men. He lodges with Zacchæus in order to win him. "As a hunter robes himself in the deerskin to get nearer his game, so Christ was clothed with human form that he might draw nearer to all humanity." And so we gaze upon Him, the loftiest specimen of mankind the race has produced, the fullest manifestation of divinity God has given to the world.

§ 117. Parable of the Minae. Luke 19: 11-28.

Reason of the Parable.
  Interest in Kingdom (v. 11).
Purpose of the Parable.

To show His place in the kingdom and that it was not imminent.

1. That of a *nobleman* (eugenes—well-born). His descent hinted at—"Only begotten Son of God," "Seed of David," etc. Mat. 1:1.
2. One in a place to assign responsibility (v. 13).
3. Yet not at that time so *"influential."* He was *"to receive . . .* a kingdom and return." "His citizens hated him," etc. (v. 14). Jewish rejection. Jno. 1:11.
4. Upon returning "having received the kingdom" He will be *powerful* (v. 15).
   a. Calls for a reckoning (v. 15).
   b. Rewards the faithful (vs. 16, 17, 18, 19) with power.
   c. Condemns the faithless (vs. 20-26) to poverty.
   d. Destroys the rebels (v. 27).

How prophetic of His place with respect to the kingdom as contained elsewhere in the Bible.

§ 118. Anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany. Mat. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 11:55-12:11.

We should not confuse this section with the incident described in Section 53. There Jesus was anointed in the house of Simon the Pharisee; here in the house of Simon, the leper. Probably the two events have been confused because the name *Simon* occurs in both cases. The time of this scene was Friday before the last Sabbath. The characters concerned are those with whom we are reasonably familiar. Dr. George D. Watson was fond of pointing out the characteristic action word or verb of each noun, and on this section he notes that "Lazarus *stood;* Martha *served;* Mary *poured";* and he might have added that Judas *criticized.*

Simon the leper was probably a relative of the Bethany family whom Jesus loved and frequently visited. While Martha served, Mary, seeming to understand the coming death of her beloved Master, took the pound of ointment

of spikenard and anointed Jesus' feet, wiping them with her hair. This act provoked the criticism of the disciples and Judas is especially pointed out by John as expressing the criticism. He observes the value of the ointment. It was three hundred dinars, equal to the value of a man's wages for one year and Judas seemed to be at that time very solicitous for the care of the poor, but John touches the very heart of his purpose and says, "Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and had the bag and took away what was put therein."

But regardless of the criticism of any one the act of Mary was approved of by the Master. He asked, "Why trouble ye the woman?" and commended her by saying "she hath wrought a good work on me." The reason for Mary's anointing Jesus might be summed up as follows:

He was the guest of honor and she therefore was glad to pour out her savings upon Him, and perform the humble office of wiping His feet.

Then what she did was prophetic for as Mark 14:8 says, "she hath anointed my body aforehand for the burying." So it was appropriate for her to anoint the Master, since He would not be long with them, while the poor would be at hand always, and had Judas been so minded he could have cared for them any time. Jesus not only recognized Mary's act as prophetic, but He Himself prophesied that she would be known wherever the Gospel was preached because of her pouring out of her treasure upon His person. Mary's act of wholehearted, candid devotion will always be pointed out as a symbol of the type of Christian lives we should live.

PART VIII

The Passion Week

Sunday

§ 119. The Triumphal Entry. Mat. 21: 1-11; Mark 11: 1-11; Luke 19: 29-34; John 12: 12-19.

In this section we see Jesus given honor. He is greeted as though He were a king. It is interesting to consider this incident in the life of Christ from the historical and prophetical as well as the spiritual aspect. Christ really rode

into Jerusalem as the four gospels here state and this was prophetic of the time when He will come as an evident monarch. Then each one in his own life should exalt Christ today and say to Him, "Hosanna in the highest."

1. *Preparation* for the triumphal entry. Mat. 21 : 1-7.
   (a) "The disciples" make the preparation. v. 1. Discipleship always precedes loyalty to Christ.
   (b) The disciples prepared with what was at hand, namely, an ass and a colt. v. 2. This was what was available at that time so we know that Christ did not ride into Jerusalem upon a steed or a charger, but rather upon a humble ass's colt. Just so the Lord has often chosen the weak and foolish for His own glory and exaltation.
   (c) Christ's demand had priority. v. 3. The ass and her colt were commandeered by King Jesus and the secular was given a sacred use. So as the Levites were taken "from among men," God today has first claim upon the lives of his disciples and this is the literal meaning of "saint." It is one who belongs to the Lord for spiritual service.
   (d) Christ expected obedience in the carrying out of his commands. Mk. 11 : 4, 7. Coöperation with the Lord is indispensable to His program.
2. The *pageant* or *procession.* Mat. 21 : 8-11. This procession attracted the multitude rather than the leaders. The people who represent the heart of the nation were instinctively drawn to Christ rather than the religious leaders who represent the head. They spread their garments and the branches of the trees, crying out "Hosanna to the Son of David."
   (a) Thus they rendered honor to Him. v. 8.
   (b) They heralded Him. v. 9.
   (c) This was done in humility. v. 10, 11. In answer to "Who is this?" the only reply came from the multitude and their answer was not as it should have been "Our Messiah," but only "Jesus, the

prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." The Pharisees bade Jesus, "rebuke thy disciples" (Luke 19:39), but to them He answered, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:40). This attitude of the Pharisees was in accord with that of the Sanhedrin to the common people in general and especially the Galileans. John 7:45-50 ff. So Christ's exaltation came from the humble multitude.

Monday

§ 120. The Cursing of the Fig Tree. Mat. 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14.

After His triumphal entry He went back that night to Bethany near by, where He was with the twelve. The hours were few and precious and that might have been the reason for His not taking sufficient food before leaving Bethany early Monday morning. As He came along to Jerusalem He saw standing alone a fig tree. Being hungered He approached it, hoping to find some figs left over from the year before or some that were edible, though not fully ripe, for it was not yet the season of figs, but He was disappointed, for "He found nothing but leaves." As both Edersheim and Geikie suggest, all in nature was symbolic to the Master, and so this live but fruitless tree reminded Him of the empty fruitless Jewish religion with which He was dealing. So to the tree He said, "Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever." This He might have said of the Jewish religion as it existed in His time as an anachronism. The fig tree withered away and the disciples heard, as Mark says. Did they see the deeper meaning and understand why He cursed the fig tree?

§ 121. Second Cleansing of the Temple. Mat. 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48.

As section 119 showed Christ riding into Jerusalem in triumph, so this section has to do with His powerful presence in the temple.

1. Christ the *powerful one.* Mat. 21 : 12. Jesus expresses Himself against the evil practices that were being carried on in the temple, just as He will against the irregularities of the human heart. Here Christ gave evidence of His being a strong, energetic prince who carried out His own wishes and ideals. There could be no righteous rule without renovation.

2. Matthew 21 : 12, 13. Christ emphasizing *prayer.* His utterance, "My house shall be called a house of prayer" shows that He put the spiritual to the fore. Prayer must go before profit. In our day when churches are apt to secularize the spiritual for the secular and monetary values there is great need for us to emphasize the reverence that Jesus had for the temple.

3. Jesus' power to heal—the *Panacea* (Mat. 21 : 14). Christ came into the temple not to tear down simply but also to build up. He did oppose their wrong practices but gave new life and health to the too weak bodies of the people who thronged Him within the temple. He was not in the temple simply as a reverent mystic to talk of prayer but to bring about definite results by using prayer to heal. When Christ is given His place He becomes creative and curative. If we let Him purge us and purify us He will accomplish for us and through us.

4. Matthew 21 : 15-16. Christ became a *priest* of *priests.* The chief priests and scribes were moved with indignation when they saw the place that He had among the people. They noted the wonderful things that He did and they listened to the children saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and their jealousy was provoked. The children knew Him to be a real priest. The professionalism of the chief priests and scribes melted away before His genuine priesthood. They were but shadows and He was the substance; they the husks and He the corn. As John Henry Jowett said, "When the sun is up the stars are down." So we should get by or through men and form to Christ. When ritual conceals Christ it is hurtful, but anything that reveals Christ is helpful. After He had cleansed the temple as Matthew says, "He left them and went forth out of the city to Bethany and lodged there." That leaving of them

is suggestive. He hardly expected that the temple would stay cleansed, but He had at least expressed to those about Him His attitude toward those evil practices. In leaving Jerusalem He left the Jews and that dispensation which despised and rejected Him, but He delights and deigns to abide in us through the Spirit today. Let us love, honor and adore Him.

Tuesday

§ 122. The Fig Tree Withered. Mat. 21: 20-22; Mark 11: 20-25.

Jesus with His disciples passing by the fig tree again observed its condition and the disciples asked, "How did the fig tree immediately wither away?" Jesus took this opportunity to instruct them in the accomplishment of faith. At the word of faith not only may a fig tree be caused to whither but a mountain may be cast into the sea. Here Jesus uttered that marvelous word which has been the encouragement to many a supplicating soul, "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for believe that ye have received them and ye shall have them." Then Jesus added, "And when ye stand praying, forgive." Did He not think of His enemies who were about to put Him to death and of the grace that would be required to utter, "Father, forgive them?"

§ 123. Christ's Authority Challenged. Mat. 21: 23-27; Mark 11: 27-33; Luke 20: 1-8.

Tuesday was a busy day for our Lord in the Passion Week. We find Him early in the temple teaching. He is surrounded by eager listeners and interrupted by the "chief priests and leaders of the people." They being unable to deny His works and words and hoping to gain some advantage over Him asked, "By what authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority?" But Jesus was wise as well as good, and tactful as well as true, so He did not answer their question directly but instead asked them a question. It was, "the baptism of John, was it from

heaven or from men?" Jesus was prepared to answer their question if they would give Him a satisfactory answer to His, so they went into conference to prepare their answer for Him. He had them between the horns of the dilemma. Said they, "if we shall say, From heaven, he will say unto us, 'Why then, did ye not believe him?' but if we say, of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet." There were only two possible answers and they could give neither answer to Jesus' question. Had they said "from heaven," they would have admitted that John's ministry was of God; but they had opposed John and they knew better than to say that John's ministry was simply from man, because the people believed in John as a prophet, so all they could do was to go back to Jesus with a lie on their lips and say, "We do not know." Then Jesus was not obliged to answer their question. His authority had come from the same source as John's baptism. We observe here the wisdom of Jesus, in asking a question and remark that those who have truth might at times take up the offensive. Robt. J. Drummond in "Faith's Perplexities," writes on the "Credulity of Unbelief." Men who are so skeptical of conservative Christianity are yet so gullible in accepting the dogmas of so-called science. A well directed question may put this class of men to flight or at least silence them.

§ 124. The Three Parables of Warning. Mat. 21: 28—22: 14; Mark 12: 1-2; Luke 20: 9-19.

These three parables of warning are intended to call the attention of Jesus' enemies and listeners in general to the folly and futility of professionalism without accomplishment (Mat. 21 : 28-32) and to the importance of giving proper place to Christ the Son of God, (Mat. 21 : 33-46) and to the certainty of judgment and justice. (Mat. 21 : 1-14.) First, Jesus spoke of the two sons, one of whom would not promise to work in the vineyard, whereas the other did promise, but the one who promised did not work, whereas the one who had not promised wrought in the vineyard. The question was whether of the twain did the will of the father. The answer was evident. Of course, the one who, though he did not promise, yet performed, pleased

his father by doing his will. So the publicans and harlots who make no profession would precede the unbelieving enemies of Christ, though they were professional religionists, because these latter did not take up with righteousness as John presented it, whereas the publicans and harlots did.

Thus works and belief are essential and go before promises and professions. Then this parable which has to do with the householder and his vineyard was very instructive as to the treatment that Jesus was receiving. When the owner of the vineyard went into a far country and then sent back his servants for his fruits, those who were left in charge of the vineyard mistreated and even killed the servants. He hoped of course that they would respect his son, whom they also killed. It is quite evident that the master of the vineyard would deal severely with these husbandmen who slew his son. "He will miserably destroy those miserable men." Mat. 21 : 41. Other husbandmen will supplant them. Jesus is the "son" of the parable and His Father is the householder, while the Pharisees and scribes are the husbandmen who rejected Jesus. Jesus quotes Psalm 118 showing that He Himself was the stone which the Jewish builders rejected. They did not recognize the corner-stone, so the kingdom of God has been taken away from them, but one day they will reckon with and recognize this stone. Their structure will be incomplete until they give Jesus a prominent place in it.

There is a legend to the effect that when Solomon's temple was being built a stone of unusual shape was brought from the quarry to the building site. The workmen could find no place for it in the wall, so they discarded it. The grass and weeds grew over it so that the workmen, not seeing it, stumbled over it and were bruised. One day they were at a loss to fill a certain niche in the wall. They recalled the rejected, despised stone, brought it forth and found it fitted and completed their wall. So one day Christ will be recognized as precious, even by those who rejected Him when He came the first time.

As Jesus spake this parable the chief priests and Pharisees knew that He referred to them and so they would have laid hold of Him except for the fact that the multitude

recognized Him as a prophet. (Mat. 21:45-46.) Then Jesus spoke a parable of a king making a marriage feast for his son and of being unsuccessful in gathering in those whom he had invited to the feast. No amount of entreaty, however, would persuade them to come. They even made light of it and proceeded to kill his servants that were sent to remind them of the feast. So the king sent forth his armies and destroyed the murderers and burned up their city, and bade his servants go into the pathways of the highways and bid as many as they should find to come to the marriage feast. And so the wedding was supplied with guests. But behold one of these guests had not a wedding garment on him. When he was accosted by the king he was speechless. His punishment was that he should be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness. They surely understood the parable. God had invited the Jewish nation with their religious leaders to grace the marriage feast of His Son but they had done despite to His invitation and spurned His prophets, and even were about to kill His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then the offer of salvation was made to the Gentiles, many of whom came in to enjoy the marriage feast of the Son; but they must be prepared for the feast. To be unprepared means to incur the indignation of the king. Darkness without in the city street is but typical of that separation that will be for those who have not on the wedding garment which prepares them for fellowship with the Son of God. So the heathen share the kingdom of the Messiah with God, but the heathen will be judged.

§ 125. Three Questions By the Jewish Rulers. Mat. 22:15-40; Mark 12:13-34; Luke 20:20-40.

The first of these three questions and its object and answer cover Mat. 22:15-22. 1. The object of the approach of the Pharisee. This was evidently to ensnare Him in His talk. v. 15. As usual the Pharisees are attempting to entrap Jesus. 2. The generalship employed by the Pharisees. v. 16. We observe how they themselves did not go direct to Jesus but sent their "disciples and the Herodians"; the latter were of a political party in favor of uniting Palestine

to Herod's dominion. They approach Jesus with a bit of flattery in order to draw Him out to make a frank statement which would endanger His life. 3. The issue. v. 17. This was as to whether or not it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar. To pay tax to Cæsar would be the same as owning his authority rather than that of Jehovah. At least it would have seemed so to certain of the Jews. Had Christ answered "No," it would have been the same as favoring a rebellion against Cæsar, and had He answered "Yes," He would have shocked the deep religious feelings of certain fanatical, even though deeply religious, Jews. The answer "Yes," also would have seemed to be against Christ's own claims so He answered most tactfully as well as truly when He said, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This answer was a rebuke to their hypocrisy and also enlightenment as to how the relation of the state and religion might be thought of. Christ taught that loyalty to the state is compatible with fidelity to God, that patriotism and religion are not mutually exclusive but should go along together.

The second question came from the Sadducees. See Mat. 22:23-33; It dealt with a certain woman having married seven brothers and the Sadducees raise the question as to whose wife she would be in the resurrection. Jesus' reply to this question was that the Sadducees err in neither knowing the Scriptures nor God's power. Their interpretation of the Scriptures was colored by their materialism. They conceived that the resurrection was simply an awakening as if from sleep, rather than a transforming by the power of God. Then Jesus instructed them as to the resurrection of the dead by observing that God at the bush said to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The Lord remarked that God was not the God of the dead but of the living. Jesus showed that our relationship to God is a living one and that relationship is not a fact of the past only. Luke observed how that certain of the scribes said, "Thou hast well said, Master." The same writer states that they durst not ask Him any question, but Matthew and Mark relate how the Pharisees

gather about Him again and how a certain lawyer tempts Him with a question which Jesus answers in a manner satisfactory to the scribe. So clearly did this scribe see the teaching of Jesus and therefore so fully, that he confirmed the Master's instruction, and the Lord remarked to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." After this there was no more asking of questions.

§ 126. Christ's Unanswerable Question. Mat. 22: 41-46; Mark 12: 35-37; Luke 20: 41-44.

Attorneys on opposite sides of a case "cross-question" not only witnesses but even one another as did Darrow Bryan at the famous Scopes trial at Dayton, Tennessee. Opponents in debate ask each other "unanswerable" questions. The fact that the Pharisees and Christ questioned one another indicates a deep-seated antagonism. When they asked Him, "By what authority doest Thou these things?" (Mat. 21:23) He answered by asking "The baptism of John, whence was it?" In Mat. 21:28 Jesus' "But what think ye?" is another question-trap for the Pharisees. Their question "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?" (Mat. 22:17) shows that they still hope to "ensnare Him in His talk." So Jesus, the Master Interrogator, finally submits to the Pharisees a quieting question or series of questions. Asked He "Whose son is" Christ? Or, what is the descent of the Messiah? Edersheim says that this was the most familiar subject of their theology. Upon their reply "The son of David" Jesus asks "How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord?" etc. Then Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1, "The Lord said unto my Lord," etc. and drives the Pharisees to the wall by again asking a question, "If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?" He is David's son only on the human side. On His divine side He is Jehovah's Son. But the Pharisees would not recognize Jesus as the Christ.

Rabbinic writings applied Psalm 110 Messianically. So both they and Jesus agree as to the Predictive character of the Psalm as well as to its interpretation. Then we note also that Christ attributes the Psalm to David.

The result of this dialogue is two-fold. "The common people heard Him gladly," and "neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." Jesus so showed up the incompetence of the Pharisees both to themselves and the people that the mouths of the former were closed and the ears of the latter opened in His presence.

§ 127. Woes Against the Scribes and Pharisees. Mat. 23; Mark 12: 38-40; Luke 20: 45-47.

The scribes and Pharisees had been shadowing Jesus. He had faced them single-handed when they ventured from their ambush and had worsted them.

They had plied Him with questions which He easily answered or deftly brushed aside, leaving them embarrassed, beaten and humiliated once and again. He had floored them with pointed "unanswerable" questions. As opponents these "religious experts," "blind leaders of the blind" were easily outclassed by the Master. So far as He personally was concerned He could have walked away, with the tread of a conqueror, from His defeated adversaries. They would not be reconciled to Him. Why should He trouble with them?

Ah! He, with characteristic solicitude, cares for "the multitudes" and "His disciples." "The Great Shepherd of the Sheep" thinks of the flock. He is no hireling. So He warns of the wolves, which are ready to pounce upon the sheep as soon as the shepherd has gone. "A bruised reed will He not break, and smoking flax will He not quench." He feeds the hungry, heals the sick, raises the dead, condemns not a weak, wayward woman in the presence of her shameless accusers. But He spares not these "hypocrites." Their serpentine nature He openly describes and deplores. Why spare the wolves and by so doing jeopardize the lambs?

Yet these "sit on Moses' seat" and "therefore whatsoever they bid you, do and observe." Jesus is no anarchist. With Him "the powers that be are ordained of God." "But do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not." Their precepts are better than their practices. They impose heavy

burdens on men by their exacting requirements (v. 4). Yet they will not raise a finger to make it easier for those who are weighed down with Rabbinic rulings. Whether, "will not move them with their finger," means *will not by writing,* in which the finger is used, *make the requirement less* so that it could be met more easily, or *put forth a finger's "worth" of effort to carry out* their own religious laws, whichever of these meanings, if either, is intended, the criticism is that these Pharisees are very severe with others and very generous with themselves." Whereas, as Dr. Pirazzini said of Dr. A. B. Simpson and Mr. Nardi, that they, being real saints, differed from ordinary saints in that they were so "generous with others and so severe with themselves."

These scribes and Pharisees limit their efforts to these "works" that are "seen of men." (v. 5.) So instead of putting more of the law of God into their minds and getting its real spirit into their hearts they "make broad their phylacteries;" i. e., enlarge "the cases or boxes made of calf-skin, and fastened by leather straps to the left arm and on the forehead, in accordance with a literal interpretation of Ex. 13:16 and Deut. 6:8." These boxes contained "slips of parchment inscribed with four portions of the Law (Ex. 13:3-10, 11-16; Deut. 6:5-9; 11:13-21)." (Cambridge Bible.)

The size of the parchment, the inside, was not altered but the box, the outside, was enlarged so as to make their piety more easily observed. The Hebrew word for these is *tephillin* and signified "prayer." But our word phylacteries is a transliteration of the Greek *phylacterin,* "defences" and in late Greek "amulets" or "charms." This study of the word is a revelation of their superstitious superficiality. The bigger the boxes which contained the few verses of the law on parchment, the more devout did these "blind leaders of the blind" imagine themselves to be.

Wearing of phylacteries was common among the Jews and probably Jesus wore them, but what He condemned was "the ostentatious enlargement of them."

Then their over-emphasis of the outward is manifest by the fact that they "enlarge the borders of their garments."

The fringe of the cloak was blue, the color of the sky, and so typical of heavenly purity. These scribes and Pharisees must have reasoned that the larger the badge, the more likely is the wearer to incarnate the principles symbolized by that badge. So eager were these scribes and Pharisees to occupy "the chief places at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues" (v. 6) that Rabbinic writings elaborate on restricting and regulating the places according to rank. In the College the most learned were to be preferred and at feasts the most aged.

Very jealous were they for "salutations in the marketplaces." To neglect to saluate a Rabbi involved punishment. It is related that two great Rabbis complained that they must have lost their appearance of learning since in the marketplace they were addressed with "May your peace be great" without "My masters" being added. Talmage writes "They make themselves drum majors in the parade." The Talmud correctly says "Love the work but hate the title," which we might interpret as suggesting that what one is and does is more important than what he is called. A great man dignifies a menial task; but a mean man degrades even a throne. "The rank is but the guinea's stamp."

So to His disciples Jesus says "But *ye* be not called Rabbi [*my great one, my honorable sir*], for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren." Christ would warn His disciples against the contagion of this unbecoming self-assertion. And besides this they had a "Rabbi," a "Teacher." He, who was teaching them, was their Teacher. They were simply "brethren." Then He warned them against letting any earthly "father" take the place of the "Father that is in heaven." Herein is suggested the peculiar fault of the Rabbis alluded to here. "The heathen Governor of Cæsarea is represented as rising up before Rabbis because he beheld 'the faces as it were of angels'; . . . . From another Rabbi rays of light are said to have visibly proceeded." This self-exaltation, even to heaven, was obnoxious to Him that "thought the being on an equality with God was not to be retained with eager grasp." (Phil. 2:6.) So using the pretentious scribes and Pharisees as examples of what He desired His disciples not to be, Jesus said "Neither be ye

called masters [leaders] for one is your Master, the Christ." He was their acknowledged "leader." He was the Christ, the Messiah, for whom these "Rabbis" were supposed to prepare the minds and hearts of the people. But an exaggerated sense of their own importance had displaced their Messianic expectation. They recognized not the Messiah.

He was about to serve all on the cross (v. 11). His humiliation was about to be completed on the cross, in pain and shame. (v. 12) "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him," (Phil. 2:9). He would be the Example of His disciples.

Woes

"Corresponding to the eight Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount with which His public ministry began, He now closed it with eight denunciations of woe." (Edersheim) With respect to the Pharisees "Love had played her part in vain." "Justice leaped upon the stage."

He who "spoke as never man spake," "with authority and not as the scribes" pronounced these "woes" within the hearing of thousands probably. Farrar says "Some of the Temple courts had room for at least 6,000 people, and it is probable that even more were assembled in them at the Passover." We admire the courage of Christ as He stands there and scathes with withering "woes" the men into whose hands He knew He would soon fall. In a few brief days He would feel their poisonous fangs and be smitten with the "bitter venom of their hatred." For Christ knew that Satan was about to seem to win an engagement at Calvary through these his emissaries who would insist on His crucifixion. But our Lord had gone in to win the final victory and redeem the race through death at the hands of the men whose hypocrisy He denounced.

Christ's "woes," or expressions of grief and indignation, are instructive as to character and practices of the scribes and Pharisees. Verse 13 condemns the misuse of the "key of knowledge" given to the scribe as he was admitted to the order. They simply locked people out of the kingdom of heaven by closing their own ears to the truth. Though "Judaism has been classed among the non-missionary re-

ligions" yet Jesus had good grounds for His reference to "proselyting" in verse 15. "John Hyrcanus imposed Judaism on Edom at the point of the sword. The conversion is recorded of whole tribes in Arabia, and on the shores of the Caspian.....Probably the proselytism in the text is connected with the charge of rapacity; the Pharisees seeking to convert wealthy Gentiles, over whom they obtained influence." (Cambridge Bible)

And new converts tend to exaggerate the externals of the religion with which they take up and so those of the Pharisees would be "twofold" worse than their religious forbears.

Verses 16-22 teach how these men, who should have been monuments of integrity, indulged in childish quibbling so as to avoid keeping their oaths.

Though the Pharisees and scribes tithed with scrupulosity, yet they disregarded judgment, mercy and faith. Thus they evinced their spiritual near-sightedness and inability to recognize values. They thus strained the gnat out of the wine but "swallowed camels into the heart."

The "woe" against cleansing the outside of the cup and platter (vs. 25, 26) is aimed at a superficial, hypocritical externalism which would appear clean on the outside but disregarded crooked dealing and corrupt living. Why be so careful to have a cup clean without; why have the behavior so correct? If a clean cup is filled by ill-gotten gain and its contents lead to debauchery, why take pains to have it immaculate on the outside.

Then as though Jesus would exhaust similes to express his utter abhorrence of the inner corruption of the Pharisees who posed as proper persons and examples of piety He likens them to "white sepulchres," (vs. 27, 28). The allusion is to the Jewish custom of whitewashing the graves, or marking them with chalk on a fixed day every year—the fifteenth of Adar—lest they would ceremonially defile themselves by unconsciously walking over them. The whitewash on the outside was the pious pretensions of the Pharisees; the "dead men's bones," in striking contrast, their utter moral decay and corruption.

These "hypocrites" deplore the slaughter of the prophets

at the hands of their fathers and seek to atone for ancestral sins by paying attention to the tombs of the righteous but Jesus labels them as true sons of their notorious sires. Said He "ye brood of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?" Since Abel's day and death God's saints and servants have been laid low by the bloody bludgeon of Cain and his descendants, among whom the Pharisees could be found.

Having emptied the contents of His holy wrath into these scathing "Woes" and having poured it down the unwilling throats of the scribes and Pharisees with merciless vigor, the Master apostrophizes Jerusalem. In holy anger He remembers tender mercy. His bowels of compassion yearn for Jerusalem, the city of the great king. Though she had "killed the prophets" yet He felt the same loving, tender care for her as a mother hen does for her brood. But Jerusalem had spurned His solicitude. They "would not" so He "could not"! So He was going and leaving Jerusalem *desolate*. But again, in God's mercy, He will come; then Jerusalem will join the children who sang, "Blessed is He"!

§ 128. The Widow's Two Mites. Mark 12: 41-44; Luke 21: 1-4.

The Master, probably physically exhausted by His denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees, sat down in the court of women over against the treasury. We fancy that He enjoyed the rest of soul and body that came to Him as He watched the multitude cast their money into the treasury. There were thirteen chests, each shaped like a trumpet. Into these were put contributions for benevolences and temple furnishings. Jesus observed that the "rich cast in much." Authorities state that so strong was the tendency for the rich to give largely for the temple that a law was enacted to keep down the gifts to a certain proportion of one's possessions. Among the givers was a poor widow. Her poverty must have been manifest by her garb or by the humble attitude with which she approached the chests. Jesus observed her dropping in two mites; equivalent to about one-seventh of a cent; then He called unto Him His disciples and said, "Verily I say unto you, this poor widow

cast in more than all they which are casting into the treasury: for they all cast in of their superfluity, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Jesus used this occasion to teach that "the essence of charity is self-denial." She gave all that she had, all her living. She possessed only two mites and, according to the law, she could not give less; so it is folly to speak of her giving two instead of one. Ambrose says one coin out of a little is better than a treasury out of much, for it is not considered how much is given but how much remains. Then we are reminded of Paul's word, "If there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to what a man hath." So the Master measures the sacrifice not by what is given but by what is left over after the gift has been made. Some one has written that no one should use "mite" to name his gifts without giving all, else he will "pass the bitterest sarcasm on himself." This beautiful little incident enabled Jesus to leave the temple with words of approval and not anger.

§ 129. Gentiles Seeking Jesus. John 12: 20-36.

To these great feasts of the Jews, foreign proselytes came. Among these, at this Passover time, were certain Greeks. The presence of these proselytes attested their sincerity for they would have come in the face of the ridicule of their countrymen. The likelihood is that these were "proselytes of the gate" who had been won over to faith in Jehovah and the Old Testament. These could attend the synagogue but not pass beyond the court of the heathen in the temple.

Desiring to see Jesus, they appealed to Philip, whose name is Greek. He, out of deference to Andrew's intimacy with the Lord, told Andrew and they two tell Jesus. Though the narratives do not so state, yet the probability is that Jesus came out to these Greeks. Some see this incident as the prelude of the transition of the Kingdom of God from the Jew to the Gentile. They remind us that Wise Men from the East came to see the baby Jesus, and that these Wise Men from the West sought the God-man. Verses 23 and 24 indicate that Jesus was reminded of His approaching death, so He referred to His glorification and spoke of His death

in the familiar words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself, but if it die, it beareth much fruit." Jesus felt Himself circumscribed as a grain of wheat is limited, for its life is bound up in the seed until it fall into the ground and sprout into new life as it disintegrates in death; then the germ is free to grow into a stock which produces many grains of wheat. Then the Master, in verse 25, asserts the great principle, "He that loveth his life loses it," etc. Then He challenges His hearers to sacrificial service.

As the shadows of the cross are seen in the distance, He says, "Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say?" Bengel remarks that He did not say, "What shall I choose?" Some manuscripts give, "Father, save me from this hour," as a question. This seems to satisfy the context. Jesus asks, "Shall I say, Father save me from this hour?" Then He says, "But for this cause came I unto this hour," and adds, "Father, glorify Thy name." Then as He paused, heaven spoke, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Some of the multitude interpreted the sound as thunder, and others, believing in Christ, thought it was an angel's voice. It was simply the Father approving the Son and giving evidence to those who heard Jesus speak. In verse 31, Jesus predicts that His death will be the death-knell and death-blow of Satan, and then graphically refers to the attractive power of the cross. As verse 34 states, the multitude knew that He referred to Himself as the Christ, and they did not understand how He could die since from the law they understood that the Messiah would abide forever. Then He uttered a parable to them about the light. We wonder if they understood.

§ 130. The Jews' Rejection of Christ. John 12: 37-50.

Verses 37-43 of this section record the Jewish rejection of Jesus, which happened according to prophecy. Isaiah is quoted. It is sad to read, "Nevertheless, even of the rulers, many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him lest they should be put out of the synagogue." These loved the praise of man more than the

glory of God. The quotations from Isaiah are not without difficulty. In Matthew 13 and Mark 4, we have these or similar words quoted to explain why Jesus spake in parables. It would seem as though by Jesus' teaching parables He intended to conceal the truth from them, and that the multitude was doomed to destruction simply because Isaiah so prophesied.

We quote the following paragraph from the Cambridge Bible, which is very clear on this point:

"At the beginning of His ministry our Lord did not teach by Parable. 'The Sermon on the Mount may be taken as the type of the 'words of grace' which He spake 'not as the scribes.' Beatitudes, laws, promises were uttered distinctly, not indeed without similitudes, but with similitudes that explained themselves.' And so He continued for some time. But His direct teaching was met with scorn, unbelief, and hardness. From this time forward 'parables' entered largely into His recorded teaching, and were at once attractive and penal.

(a) *Attractive,* as 'instruments of education for those who were children in age or character,' and offering in a striking form much for the memory to retain, and for the docile and truth-loving to learn.

(b) *Penal,* as testing the disposition of those who listened to them; withdrawing the light from such as loved darkness and were wilfully blind, and protecting the truth from the mockery of the scoffer; finding out the fit hearers, and leading them, but them only, on to deeper knowledge."

Then in the closing verses of this section, Jesus asserts His authority and makes His hearers responsible directly to the Father.

§ 131. Discourse Concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem and the End of the World. Mat., Chapters 24, 25, 26, 1, 2; Mark, Chapter 13; Luke 21: 5-38.

The Master with heavy heart (Mat. 23:37) was going out of the temple. To the Jews He had said, "Your house is left unto you *desolate.*" He was leaving. The "house"

was theirs. He had cleansed the temple twice because He regarded it as His "Father's house." But the very fact that two cleansings were necessary argues that God's chosen people were poor "housekeepers." They had prostituted the temple which Herod, the Idumean, had built to curry their favor and flatter their religious pride.

What a building it was! So magnificent! How solid! Josephus says that it was built of white stones of great size, thirty-seven and a half and even forty-five feet long, twelve feet thick, and eighteen feet broad. The temple represented a "splendor so great that it was often said that he who had not seen it had missed one of the wonders of the world."

Possibly fearing that Jesus would miss some of the grandeur of the temple, "His disciples came to him to shew him the buildings of the temple," thus manifesting a religious patriotism characteristic of their race. How they must have been shocked when Jesus prophesied the destruction of this pile of massive masonry; this work of art, patriotism and religion!

(See "The Training of the Twelve," A. B. Bruce, page 331.)

Little wonder that after they had descended into the beautiful, luxuriant Kedron Valley, and then had gone up to the Mount of Olives, where a commanding view of the temple was possible, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked Him privately, "When *shall* these things be? And *what* shall be the sign of thy coming and the consummation of the age?"

The small group of disciples had cast their lot with Jesus of Nazareth. He was their Christ, "the Son of the living God," as Peter had confessed. Whatever the Messianic expectations of others were, He was their Messiah. So they were ready even to see the temple destroyed, though they shared Israel's pride in it, if only their Christ might come into His kingdom. Jesus saw the temple and its services as a hollow shell. The kernel or life of the religion of Jehovah had become corrupted and dried up. An enemy's foot would break the brittle shell. The disciples saw the temple as the last obstacle to Christ's unhindered reign. They connected its destruction with His "presence" and a

new age. So they eagerly and "privately" ask Him, *"When* shall these things be? And *what* shall be the sign?" etc.

The eagerness of the disciples to know just when the Jewish religion, whose center and sanctuary was the temple, would go down, and when Christ's kingdom would be erected upon its ruins, led the Master to warn them against being led astray. Mat. 24:4. False Christs would lead them astray. Wars would trouble them as being harbingers of the "end." But the Master would have His disciples fearless in the face of calamity and personal danger; He would have them true amidst the tribulation and hatred that are to try them. He urges endurance to the end (Mat. 24:13) in spite of stumblings, treacheries, hatreds, and wanderings. He predicts the chilling effect of iniquity upon Christian love and promises that the end will come after the "gospel of the kingdom" shall have been preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all nations.

Strangely enough neither Mark nor Luke refers to the preaching of the Gospel "unto all the nations." Mark stresses the need of endurance in face of trials (13:12, 13). Luke, with his characteristic human touch, assures that "not a hair of your head shall perish" and encourages a patient endurance (21:18, 19).

A study of this first section of the parallel accounts, therefore, leads us to conclude that Jesus taught that *faithfulness* and *patience* are valuable in the presence of any teaching on His "coming" and "the end of the world." Clearly what He alludes to in Mat. 24:5-12 are not to be regarded so much as "signs" of His near "coming," but rather as *happenings that make the Christians panicky, restless, and maybe too eager for His return.* Therefore, He would foster in them a fidelity to duty and a confidence of our heavenly Father's care "until" He returns. The vitality of Christianity and the strength of our faith are made evident by our "carrying on" in the bodily absence of our Captain. Let us maintain our morale "until" He appears.

Then after Jesus had encouraged to steadfastness, faith and patience, He answers their question, "When shall these things be?" Yet He gives no date, but rather tells the circumstances of the fall of Jerusalem (Mat. 24:15-28). If

Mat. 24:15, Mark 13:14, and Luke 21:20 are parallel passages then "the abomination of desolation" is the besieging army, or "in the general sense in which the Jews took it, that the heathen power (Rome, the abominable) would bring desolation—lay the city and temple waste."

If the "abomination of desolation" referred to could have been that of Daniel 11:31, then Antiochus Epiphanes would have been intended. 2 Maccabees 6 relates his abominations. But that was history in Jesus' day. Though this may be repeated by Anti-Christ (Dan. 9:27), of whom Antiochus Epiphanes is a fitting type, yet the simple and easily held view is the one first stated; namely, Rome's armies. Says Newman: "Titus, son of Vespasian, with an army of 80,000, besieged Jerusalem in A. D. 70." Josephus relates that the besieged held out obstinately. Famine, pestilence, and cannibalism were added to the destructive army, etc. See Newman, Vol. I, page 117.

Referring to this period Orelli writes: "A greater catastrophe than the mortal combat of the Jewish people with the Roman world power, and the destruction of the holy city, is unknown to the history of the world." In keeping with Mat. 24:16, Eusebius relates that the Christians of Judea (warned by the prediction) fled to Pella in 68 A. D. Lives were so hazarded that flight from roof to roof was preferable rather than to risk a descent into the house. Field laborers did well to sacrifice their outer garments and to escape in the tunic only. A mother, with a child to nurse and carry, was, of course, seriously handicapped in a race for life. So the fewer deterrents the better when the Roman legions are in pursuit.

Commenting on "great tribulation" (Mat. 24:21), the Cambridge Bible says, "No words can describe the unequalled horrors of this siege. It was the Passover season, and Jews from all parts were crowded within the walls . . . The temple-courts swam with the blood of civil discord, which was literally mingled with the blood of the sacrifices. Jewish prisoners were crucified by hundreds in view of their friends . . . The inhabitants were reduced by famine to the most loathsome of food and to deeds of unspeakable cruelty. Jerusalem was taken August 10, A. D. 70. 1,100,-

000 Jews perished in the siege; 100,000 were sold into slavery. With the fall of Jerusalem, Israel ceased to exist as a nation. It was truly the end of an aeon." Scanty food supply, the crowded city, etc., "shortened" the siege since the defences were very strong. Josephus reports Titus as saying, "It was God alone who ejected the Jews from these fortifications."

The Jews, and even the Jewish Christians, "the elect," would be tempted in their desolation to take up with false Christs. Hence the warnings of Mat. 24:23-26. The true "Second" coming of the "Son of man," the real Christ, will be as evident to His disciples as a bright lightning flash across the darkened sky. So why go after false Christs? As eagles detect the presence of a carcass, so with unfailing spiritual perception will the "elect" perceive their Redeemer when He comes.

Luke, always supplying us with the human element, pictures the Jews "led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Geniles be fulfilled. Thus he gives us our bearings. Cf. Mat. 24:27 with Luke 21:24. With a few strokes of the pen we are carried over centuries—1855 years to date—(70 plus 1855 equals 1925).

Thus, we judge, Jesus in Mat. 24:4-26 and in the parallel accounts answers the first question asked in verse three, "*When* shall these things [the destruction of Jerusalem] be?" But the disciples had linked the destruction of the temple with Christ's coming and "the end of the world." Mat. 24:3. On this Bruce says, "Local and partial judgments are wont to be thus mixed up with the universal one in men's imaginations; and hence almost every great calamity which inspires awe leads to anticipation of the last day." Then Bruce quotes Luther's words, "The world cannot stand long," etc., spoken when his mind was clouded by tribulation. He recalls also the fact that "towards the close of the tenth century people allowed churches to fall into disrepair because the end of the world was deemed close at hand." But Jesus urged that "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world . . . and *then*

shall the end come." No tribulations must deter our evangelizing.

As we observed above, Luke 21:24 supplies what Matthew lacks and "interprets the *tribulation* (Mat. 24:29) so as to include the subsequent long-lasting dispersion of Israel among the nations." So since Jerusalem's destruction we have had "the times of the Gentiles."

For nineteen centuries these "times" have continued. Christ has not come back yet, though many "False Christs" (Mat. 24:24) have appeared. When the Real Christ returns, His followers will become aware of it (Mat. 24:27, 28). But not until after "the tribulation" (Mat. 24:29) will He return. Evidently "the *sign* of His coming" requested by His disciples is the series of events and phenomena suggested in Mat. 24:29. Edersheim interprets the language here as referring to no "visible physical signs in the literal heavens," but rather the crumbling of Gentile world powers—the dimming of earth's leading lights. These nations referred to will cease to have a place in the sun. The Cambridge Bible takes the same view. After these startling changes and shakings "shall all the tribes of the earth mourn," probably during the "Great Tribulation" and then "they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds . . ."

As we read the text we are convinced that the Master did *not* give His disciples the information which they desired. Mat. 24:3 specifically tells us just what they wanted to know. *"When"* and *"what* sign?" They were wrong in supposing that the temple's destruction and Christ's "coming" (i. e., presence) and the "consummation of the age" would necessarily synchronize. Did Jesus mean to distinguish between the, to us, two events and times? Did He have or avail Himself of full prophetic power on this occasion? Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 compel a negative answer. Then they evidently thought the Jewish age would end all except Christ's personal rule. Thus they were ignorant of our (Gentile's) "day of grace," which has continued nineteen centuries since.

As the fig tree's leaves are a "sign" of approaching summer, so "all these things" will signify that *"it* is nigh."

Luke explains Mat. 24:33 in Luke 21:31 and says that it is "the kingdom of God" which "is nigh." So "nigh" was the Master's prophecy to fulfillment, it would seem, that He said "This generation shall not pass away till all things be accomplished." Jerusalem was destroyed within that generation. But to apply this prediction to the coming of Christ we must think of that generation containing in embryo the succeeding generation of the church age. That was a generation of beginnings.

Surely the urge of the whole discourse was "Watch therefore for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh." Mat. 24:42. The time is uncertain, but the event will occur, the time will come. Therefore, watch! Noah watched; one of the "two men . . . in the field" will be watching.

Some will be "left." Just as "the door was shut" and the five virgins who were not prepared to wait for the Bridegroom were excluded from the marriage, so many will be "left" when Christ comes because they are not prepared to "watch."

Then in the parable of the talents (Mat. 25:14-30) the Master warned against *sitting idly by, faithless* and *critical* while "a man went into another country," having "delivered unto them his goods." Only the two servants who had used their talents profitably were rewarded. The other one, who did not even care enough for his master's goods to put what he had been entrusted with out on interest, was cast out as unprofitable. So if the parable of the ten virgins urges to piety and Holy Spirit fullness, that of the talents indicates the necessity of good works until He returns. Failure in either of these requirements means exclusion from Christ. See Mat. 25:10-13 and 25:30.

In his "The Life of Christ," Canon Farrar, referring to "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world," says, "This question of the Apostles drew from Him the great Eschatological Discourse . . . of which the four moral keynotes are 'Beware!' and 'Watch!' and 'Endure!' and 'Pray.'" Farrar believes that difficulties may be disposed of by letting the Synoptic Gospels throw light upon one another; by agreeing that Jesus' actual words were condensed; by

bearing in mind that probably we have a Greek rendering of Aramaic vernacular; by resting assured that the object of Prophecy is moral warning, primarily, rather than chronological indication; by accepting with quiet reverence that in His human capacity Jesus did not know the day and the hour (Mark 13:32).

Then in Mat. 25:31-46, Jesus discloses how that He who was in their midst as the humble "Son of man," will come "in His glory and all the angels with Him." No longer will He be *among them as one that serveth.* But "then shall He sit on the throne of His glory." As He spake He was fulfilling Phil. 2:7, 8; but *then* He will fulfill Phil. 2:9-11. No nation will be exempt from His judgment (Mat. 25:32a). His power will be as an oriental shepherd's when he divides sheep from goats. The "sheep" will be those who minister to Christ through His "brethren"; the "goats on the left" will be those who neglected Christ by ignoring His "least."

How these words must have assured His disciples that He loved and cared for them and that one day, the Day of His power, they would be vindicated and their enemies punished.

But by no means least important in this passage is the reference to "eternal punishment" (Mat. 25:46). The meaning of this is determined by the word "eternal," *aionios.* Liddell and Scott's classical Greek lexicon gives *lasting, eternal* for *aionios. Aion,* from which it is derived, according to this reliable work, is first *a space or period of time, one's life long, a generation, an age,* then *long space of time,* and then *eternity.* So also *eis tous aionas ton aionon,* literally *unto the ages of the ages* is rendered *forever and ever.*

Upon turning to Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament which is a translation, revision and enlargement of Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti ("key of the New Testament") we find a striking agreement with the above meanings of *aionios.* The latter work devotes about five columns to these two words because of their bearing upon Christian teaching. He observes the two possible etymologies of *aion: aien* poetic for *aei* (always)—plus *on* (being); i. e., being always. Aristotle and Proclus give

this. "But more probable is the conjecture that *aion* is so connected with *aemi,* to breathe or blow, as to denote properly that which causes life, vital force." However, Thayer concedes that *aion* is generally connected with *aei* (always), Skr. *aivas,* Lat. *aevum,* Goth. *aus,* Germ. *ewig,* Eng. *aye, ever.* This last statement makes us restful about translating the adjective *aionios* derived from *aion,* everlasting. Says Thayer further, *"Aion* in Attic prose differs from *chronos* by denoting time unlimited and boundless which is not conceived of as divisible into *aiones* (ages) but rather into *chronoi* (times)." Further he states, "The adjective *achronos* (lit. not time), independent of time, above and beyond all time, is synonomous with *aionios;* where time (with its subdivisions and limitations) ends eternity begins." Here we have a suggested solution to the problem of how a word, *aion,* which is translated *age* in some passages (Mat. 13:22, Margin of R. V.; Gal. 1:4, Margin of R. V. and elsewhere) can be rendered *"forever"* in others (John 6:51, 58; Heb. 5:6, et al). *"An unbroken age"* is "perpetuity of time, eternity." Then how could God better convey to our minds, accustomed to thinking of beginnings and ends, the notion of endlessness of duration, than by piling up "ages" (aiones)? Soon we have reached the limit of our imagination. No human eye could see the top of a pile of all the mountains of earth. So no human mind can measure the "for ever," *eis tous aionas,* unto the ages, of Heb. 13:8; likewsie "forevermore," *eis pantas tous aionas,* unto all the ages of Jude 25 suggests eternity to man. Then who would dare to say that *eis tous aionas ton aionon,* unto the ages of the ages, in Gal. 1:5, means anything else than everlasting "for ever and ever."

It seems to the point to observe with Scofield that *aionios* is used to express the duration of the believers blessedness, and I add *in the very same verse in which aionios expresses the duration of the suffering of the wicked* (Mat. 25:46). If one is *"everlasting,"* why not the other? And who would claim less for the "blessedness" of believers?

How those that advocated rendering *aionios* age-long or age-enduring must be thrown into a panic, or else do violence to their sense of consistency when they read "eternal God,"

aionion theon, in Romans 16:26 and "eternal spirit," *pneumatos aionion* in Hebrews 9:14! Certainly they cannot limit the Persons of the Trinity to an age!

§ 132. Conspiracy Between the Chief Priests and Judas. Mat. 26:1-5, 14-16; Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11; Luke 22:1-6.

After the Master's words on the Judgment, He prophesied afresh that He would be crucified at the Feast of the Passover, two days hence. Evidently the disciples were not yet prepared for this unwelcomed news.

Another group was bent on the consummation of His death. The Matthew account says that "the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together under the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas."

Edersheim makes the point that their gathering was consultative rather than judicial. He infers this from the fact that they were meeting in the high priest's palace, rather than in their ordinary meeting-place. Their counsel was how that they might take Jesus by subtlety and kill Him. Their conclusion was, "Not during the feast, lest a tumult arise among the people." These Jewish leaders knew the price that they would have to pay for the creating of a tumult, because they well knew the character of Pontius Pilate, and how that vengeance would be wreaked on the leaders of such an uprising.

It was to this group, enemies of Christ, bent on taking His life, that Judas went. Just why Judas came to the state of mind that he did, is interesting to contemplate. It seems as though the darkness had been gradually gathering over his head, and as Luke 22:3 states, "Satan entered into Judas." The state to which he came is, as understood by Edersheim, as follows:

"It is a terrible night-study, that of Judas. We seem to tread our way over loose stones of hot molten lava, as we climb to the edge of the crater, and shudderingly look down its depths. And yet there, near there, have stood not only St. Peter in the midst of his denial, but mostly all of us, save they whose Angels have always looked up into the Face of

our Father in heaven. And yet, in our weakness, we have even wept over them! There, near there, have we stood, not in the hours of our weakness, but in those of our sore temptation, when the blast of doubt had almost quenched the flickering light, or the storm of passion or of self-will broken the bruised reed. But He prayed for us — and through the night came over desolate moor and stony height the Light of His Presence, and above the wild storm rose the Voice of Him who has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Yet near to us, close to us, was the dark abyss; and we can never more forget our last, almost sliding, foothold as we quitted its edge. A terrible night-study, this of Judas."

"Judas, the man of Kerioth, was the only one of the twelve disciples who came from Judæa." He carried the bag and must, therefore, have had administrative ability. It has been wondered why Jesus ever committed this work to him, and has been stated that it was probably that he was naturally fitted for government, and that the Master, therefore, gave him this work to keep him from brooding dissatisfaction, alienation, and even apostasy. But, on the other hand, one's gift may be his downfall, as was, evidently, so with Judas.

Certainly Judas must have experienced the wonderful works of Jesus, as did the other apostles, but he was evidently disappointed when the Master kept looking forward to a Cross rather than a Crown. He could not bear to hear Jesus praise a woman who lavished ointment worth 300 pence. That seemed to him to be wasteful extravagance. This is indicative of his character, and of what he valued. So when he had heard it announced repeatedly by the Master Himself that He was to be crucified, and when he learned that the chief priests and elders of the people were bent on this business, he evidently thought that he may as well get something out of it, so he sold himself to dog the Master's steps and watch for an opportunity to turn Him over to those who would crucify Him.

Being one of the disciples, and familiar with the habits of the Master, he was well qualified to do this dastardly deed. He finally came to the point where he sold himself

as well as the Master, with the question, "What are you willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" Thus he bargained for 30 pieces of silver, equal to 3 pounds and 15 shillings, or $18.25. This was the literal fulfillment of Zech. 11, for the money was actually weighed out of the temple treasury. It was the legal price of a slave. Possibly by paying this price, the chief priests and elders thought that by some legal fiction, they could clear their own consciences. It is to be observed that the Lord who became the Servant of servants, was paid for out of the temple money, which was used for the purchase of sacrifices, and hence this is all wrought with deep symbolic significance.

After Judas, however, had sold his Lord, he had to reckon with his conscience. This faithful monitor of the soul brought him into utter desolation and into a dense darkness, deeper than that of the night of the betrayal, when with the kiss, he betrayed the Innocent. What could he do but rush back to his purchasers and throw the accursed money clanging at their feet, and then cry out in bitter agony of soul, "I have betrayed Innocent Blood."

Judas was then friendless, for the heartless priests and elders sent him lurching and lunging back into the darkness to the death of suicide. One cannot but wonder about the soul of Judas, and as to whether or not there was eternal compassion for the betrayal of Christ, or on the other hand, whether he was ever aught than Jesus named him, "a devil"?

Thursday (Sections 133-135)

§ 133. The Last Supper. Mat. 26: 17-30; Mark 14: 12-26; Luke 22: 7-30; John 13: 1-30.

The first day of the feast of unleavened bread was the 14th of Nisan. This was also called the preparation of the Passover. The two feasts are sometimes included in the term "Passover," or that of "Unleavened Bread." The offering of the Lamb took place on the 14th at the evening of sacrifice. The paschal lamb was celebrated after sunset on the 14th, that is, strictly speaking, on the 15th of Nisan. We recall, as Section 82 states, that the brethren of Jesus

desired Him to go up to the feast of tabernacles in order that He might manifest Himself to the world. At that time Jesus said, "My time has not yet come." However, here He speaks in a different tone and says, "My time is at hand." Hence He instructed His disciples to arrange for the passover at the house of a certain man.

Luke 22:14 states that "when the hour was come, he sat down and his disciples with him." Then He said to them, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Evidently this was the first passover that He in person presided over. So at His first, last and only passover the sacrifice which He offered was symbolic of Himself. Here He anticipated Himself as the "Lamb of God suffering" and He was about to suffer, as does a lamb, in silence. This occasion joined the old dispensation with the new, for Christ was at once the passover lamb and the bread of life. It is quite significant that His public ministry began with the ordinance or sacrament of baptism, and that it ended with that of the Lord's Supper. The former ordinance is significant of our entrance into the new life and the latter signifies our being sustained in this life.

John 13 deals first with the Master manifesting His limitless love towards His disciples. He did this by washing their feet. The suggestive expression is at the close of the first verse, "He loved them unto the end," or, as the margin reads, "to the uttermost." I prefer the translation, "He loved them to the limit," and recall 1 Corinthians 13:8, "Love never faileth." This speaks of love's constancy. We first observe that the consciousness of death's nearness did not deter Him from manifesting His love. He knew that His hour was come, yet He continued to love unperturbed.

Then we observe that the presence of Judas, His enemy, did not prevent His manifesting His love. As verse 21 says, "He was troubled in spirit and testified . . . one of you shall betray me," yet the presence of the traitor did not prevent Jesus from washing His disciples' feet, nor indeed those of Judas. See verse 12.

Then we are overwhelmed as we note that Jesus washed His disciples' feet conscious of His place and power. "The

Father had given all things into his hands." Jesus acted, therefore, from the purest of motives with no ulterior object in mind.

As we think of His humble service here, we see in it His originality and initiative. "He riseth from supper," verse 4. He left His place of honor in order to do this. His object evidently was to give them an example. As He said, His hope was that the example would be more instructive to them than mere words. What they would see with their own eyes would be more impressive than precept. Papini says, "For raw, untrained minds action has more meaning than words." So at personal discomfort and at the expense of His own dignity, He manifested His love by the washing of His disciples' feet. The author referred to above says, "Only a mother or a slave would have done what Jesus did that evening. The mother for her little children, but no one else; the slave for his master, but for no other."

We are interested to see how the Master's love was received and our only gauge is Peter who at first resented the Lord's washing his feet (v. 6). Said he, "Washest *Thou* my feet?" The incongruity of it shocked Peter. They had not washed one another's feet, why should He wash theirs? But Peter's ignorance of the real significance of the act was apparent to Christ (v. 7). Here Peter represents a group of fastidious philosophers who see only the new, naked, raw, bald, historical Roman crucifixion. So for them Calvary has no romance and hence for their sins there is no remission. Compare 1 Cor. 1:18-25.

Peter not only resented but *refused* to permit the Lord to wash his feet (v. 8), but in so doing he forgot the Master's Lordship and was reminded, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." There is a tendency to overlook the sovereignty of God and to dictate terms to Him, forgetting that He is free to work as He will and where He will.

Then, when Peter saw and comprehended *without reservation,* with childish enthusiasm, with the boom of abandonment, he said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." This is the ideal. Real saints understand this.

We are amazed that Judas' feet were washed also, but in

a deeper sense Judas was the feet of the disciples that day, as verses 10 and 11 indicate. Said the Master, "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet." They had come from the public bath to the feast, but in coming their feet had been contaminated with the dust of the wayside. Therefore, when Jesus said, "Ye are clean, but not all," He followed that statement with, "He knew him that should betray him; therefore said he, ye are not all clean." Poor Judas was disappointed at Christ's extravagances. He looked for the setting up of the Kingdom at once and hoped to become Secretary of the Treasury. Failure in this piqued him.

We observe then how Christ instructed His disciples by His act of love here:

(1) Cleansing goes with discipleship; sanctification goes with justification. We should be specific and particular. See verse 10.

(2) Humble service, altruism, should be their ideal (vs. 12-17). The evangelical church in general has agreed that this act of Jesus was symbolical of service and that it need not be literally followed in our day. During the first 300 years of the Church it was so understood. It was evidently an act of hospitality then and there. The Synod of Elvira, 306, condemned the practice of feet washing, though some since and yet observe it.

(3) Happiness comes from action rather than knowledge (v. 17).

(4) A contrast of this service with the conduct of Judas makes love resplendent. It is as a candle burning in the night.

Then Christ plainly stated, "Verily, verily, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me." Upon this His disciples were confused. Simon Peter in his accustomed eagerness beckoned to John, who reclined on Jesus' bosom, that he would get from Him the secret as to who the traitor was. Thereupon John leaned back on Jesus breast and said, "Lord, who is it?" The Master's reply was that it would be he "for whom I shall dip the sop and give it to him." Then

the sop was given by Jesus to Judas. Then we read the horrifying statement, "Satan entered into him" and Jesus urged "that thou doest, do quickly." This was all done secretly. Jesus evidently had whispered His answer to John and also carried on the conversation with Judas secretly. Therefore, "no man at the table knew for what intent he spake unto him." Verse 29 indicates that the disciples thought Jesus gave Judas instructions about the use of the money. Then follows one of the most ominous words of sacred Scripture, "He then having received the sop went out straightway: *and it was night.*" It was not only the hour of night but it was night, black darkness, for the soul of Judas.

As Luke records, "There arose also contention among them which of them is accounted to be greatest." Whether this contention preceded or followed the washing of the disciples' feet is problematic, but Edersheim believes that this contention grew out of the order of their seating around the table and that Judas got the seat of honor to the left of Jesus, while John was on Jesus' right.

We naturally feel the pity of all this strife on such an occasion, inasmuch as the striving was for place, prominence and pre-eminence, not for another but for self. But such striving was Rabbinical, not Christian, so the Master instructed them that their ways were wordly and Gentile. We can hardly imagine that this strife could occur after Jesus washed the disciples' feet, but if it did, it indicates how utterly obtuse were even the twelve in their spiritual sensibilities. In order that Jesus might show them that His kingdom was not of this world He recalled to them the well-known standards of the Gentiles (Luke 22:25-27). Then He said, "But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." He was aiming to teach them that honor goeth before humility. Compare 1 Pet. 5:5 and Phil. 2:1-11. This latter passage records the kenosis of our Lord which precedes and prepares for exaltation. Men have marvelled that Jesus ever entrusted His kingdom to these humble men who did not seem to make rapid strides in things spiritual, yet the Master knew to trust them and to believe that His teaching would bear fruit, and so He even promised, "I ap-

point unto you a kingdom even as my Father appointed unto me . . . ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Jesus could trust them because He counted on their success.

Then followed the institution of the Lord's Supper, this ordinance which has meant so much for the spiritual life of the church. It was evidently eaten every first day of the week in the early church and some communions to this day so observe it. The bread fitly represents His body and the cup His blood. Extreme literalists read transubstantiation into "This is my body," but in humble reply we ask, "How could the bread have been His literal body since He was then in His literal body?" But whosoever eats of the loaf dedicated to this holy use, takes in Christ spiritually. As to the cup, the Master said, "Drink ye all of it." The word "all" is of course in the nominative case and the statement clearly means, "All ye drink from it." None were to be excluded. Thus they were sustained, as the bread would suggest, and thus were they assured of their cleansing from sin as the flowing wine, representing the blood of Christ, suggests. Then, this reminds us of "the covenant." This is the new and better covenant of which Hebrews 7 and 8 speak so fully, which is based entirely upon the promise and character of God, not upon the works and worth of man. As Paul said, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this blood, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." This communion ordinance, therefore, is a memorial of God's covenant by which we have our cleansing, "unto remission of sin." Shall we not think of this with respect to the new covenant as we think of the rainbow with respect to the Noahic covenant? It is the token. After this supper, the Master promised that He would "drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Then followed the hymn and going to the Mount of Olives.

§ 134. Christ's Farewell Discourses. Mat. 26: 31-35; Mark 14: 27-31; Luke 22: 31-38; John 13: 31-16: 33.

During the Passover meal, Jesus, by the giving of the sop (John 13:26) to Judas, indicated who should betray

Him. Then Judas "went out straightway" to "do quickly" the dastardly deed. Then occurred that unfortunate, and alas, often since repeated quarrel or contention among His disciples, as to "which of them is accounted to be greatest." The Master availed Himself of the occasion to teach them that "he that is chief" is "he that doth serve."

Then followed the institution of the Lord's Supper.

The "Farewell Discourses" were probably all spoken before Christ and His disciples had left the Passover chamber.

Judas' going out was ominous to Jesus. So He said, "Now the Son of man is glorified," etc. (John 13:31). Evidently the exit of Judas was to Jesus the first act in the drama of His death; and He with supernatural buoyancy rode over the turbulent sea of pain and death, in His imagination, and spoke only of the victory side to His timorous disciples.

How tender must He have become when He said to them: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you . . . Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you." He had said this to the Jews. Now He says it to His disciples. He had left the Jews. Their house was left unto them *desolate*. Now He is about to separate from His chosen.

Therefore said He, "Love one another; even as I have loved you . . . By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Peter, inquisitive and expressive as usual, then asked, "Lord, whither goest thou?" The answer is a study. (John 13:36). Peter desired to accompany Jesus. But, said the Lord, "not.....now; but.....afterwards." Peter would know "why cannot I follow thee even now?" "I will lay down my life" for Thee. Peter felt he could make the supreme sacrifice for His Master, and he meant well. One has said he loved most "extensively" if not most intensely. But Jesus, knowing his weakness, predicted his denial of his Lord ere the cock would crow.

Said Jesus, "All ye shall be offended in me this night." When the shepherd would be smitten, then would the sheep be scattered. Even Peter, so insistent that he would not be offended, was about to deny his Lord. Satan had "out-

asked" for Peter that he might sift him as wheat. Jesus had made supplication for him that his faith might not fail. Though Satan was permitted to "sift" Peter, yet Jesus had prevailed and Peter's faith would hold.

Then in Luke 22:35-38 Jesus tells them of the need of their being prepared with "purse," "wallet" and "sword" since "He was reckoned with transgressors."

Chapters 14, 15 and 16 of John contain the Lord's farewell addresses. The contents of the 14th chapter are well suited to comfort the hearts of the disciples clouded with sorrow at the thought of separating from their Master. The Jews had the idea that those in glory occupied different bodies, which correspond to their stations in life. Jesus assured them that "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will receive you unto myself." Though in His Father's house there were "many mansions," yet they would be *with Him* there.

Thomas then inquires as to the way, and Jesus assures him that He Himself is the way. Confidence in Christ guarantees that there will be no missing of the way. So this 14th chapter is both comforting and informing.

Philip is quite a literalist, and when Jesus refers to the Fathers, says, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Then in verse 9 Jesus clears up the matter by indicating that He is the manifestation of the Father.

Then to instruct them and encourage them further He says that because He goes to the Father, they who believe on Him would do His works, and even greater works. We now understand the meaning of that word when we remember how that the Holy Spirit, being poured forth upon His Ascension, enabled His disciples to do these greater works. And today this same Holy Spirit, filling us, enables us to carry on the work of Christ. He was limited by His having only one body; whereas, today His disciples and ambassadors are scattered world-wide. So Jesus speaks of "another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."

Knowing that He had not succeeded in imparting to them all that they should know, and evidently believing that they were aware of their lack of knowledge, Christ assured His disciples that the Holy Spirit "shall teach you all

things," etc. vs. 25, 26. So this chapter closes with the beautiful words, "Peace I leave with you," etc.

Then in Chapter 15 our Lord stresses the importance of constant contact with Himself by using the figure of the Vine. The Father is the Husbandman; Christ is the true Vine, and His disciples are the branches. He urges that they abide in Him in order that the Husbandman may receive fruit from their lives. This fruit-bearing is of primary importance. As Jesus said, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit, and so shall ye be my disciples."

But He intimates that along with this abiding life, there will be the cleansing of the Heavenly Husbandman. Pruning will be necessary; so Christ here deals with a very important truth—that the life and fruit of the believer is communicated to him from the Vine, Christ Jesus, and this is the necessary process by which the Father is gratified and glorified. This abiding is realized by an adherence to Christ's commandments, the greatest of which is "that ye may love."

So while John 14 speaks of comfort and communion, John 15 stresses the communication of the divine life to the believer as the necessary source of fruit bearing.

In chapter 16, verse 1, the Master states why He gave these farewell addresses: "These things have I spoken unto you that ye should not stumble." Christ was aware of the trials that were before them, not simply the great test of His death, but the after trials, to which they would be subjected after His Ascension. Said He, "The hour cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that He offereth service unto God." Christ is foretelling them of these things in order that they might be prepared for the worst.

In verse 5 Jesus reminded them that not one had asked Him, "Whither goest thou?" Thomas' question, (14:5), dealt more with the way than the destination. Sorrow had filled their hearts, and they had become engrossed in their own loss rather than interested in the place to which their Master was going. But Jesus assures them that His departure is necessary to the coming of the Comforter, whom He would send, and who did, when He came, convict the world in respect of sin, righteousness and judgment. Dealing

briefly on the great effective work of the Spirit, Jesus then tells them that they were unable to bear all that He had to tell them, but that the Spirit of Truth would guide them further into all truth. He assured them that this Spirit would be faithful to the Father and Himself: (16:13-15.) So He tells them that they would be scrutinizing Him carefully just a little while, alluding to the short time He had with them before His trial and death, and then after a little time again, referring to the time He would spend in the tomb, they would see Him again. Thus He instructs them and quiets their fears. He tells them that sorrow was directly ahead, but that it would soon be transformed into joy, just as the mother forgets the pain of travail in the joy of the man-child born into the world.

Then He assures them that they will have recourse directly to the Father, through His name, in prayer. They had been accustomed to come to Him; henceforth they would go to the Father through Him.

The closing verses of John 16 give the purpose of these discourses. Said He, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace." Faithfully and fully He spoke of their tribulation, but in the same breath bade them "Be of good cheer," since He, the Vine, of which they were the branches, and hence of whose life they were partaking, had overcome the world.

§ 135. The Intercessory Prayer. John 17.

When we come to this prayer we have what is really "the Lord's Prayer." The first part of it has been regarded as the High Priest consecrating Himself. The hour had arrived. Now the Father must glorify the Son in order that God might be glorified. Christ was concerned that *"all"* (pan); that is, the totality that had been given him, should receive eternal life. Jesus was eager that every one for whom He was about to die should receive eternal life, which He said was "knowing the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."

This prayer is evidently one of final committal on the part of Christ, who is about to be offered as the Lamb of

God for the sins of the world, and He is dependant upon the Father that His sacrifice might avail, and that through His death men might come to know God, which knowledge is synonymous with eternal life. He made bold to say, "I manifested thy name unto them thou gavest me out of the world." He had faithfully revealed God to His disciples, who believed that He was sent of God. So on this occasion He prays for them especially, rather than for the world. In this prayer, He recognizes that His Father's interests are His, and His are His Father's, (verse 10). He is about to leave the world, but His disciples are to be left behind, and He will be glorified in Him; hence, He prays the Father to keep them that have been given to Him; and He prays for their unity in the words, "That they may be one, even as we." He reminds the Father that His protective care has been effectual with but the loss of the son of perdition that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. The burden, therefore, of this prayer is that His disciples should be kept in the world from the evil.

He anticipates that they will encounter the antagonism of the world, since they are not of it, even as He is not of it, and He prays for their sanctification by the truth.

Then He enlarges the circle of His prayer and petitions on behalf of those who shall believe through His disciples. The church by schisms rent asunder and heresies distressed must read more carefully these last words of the Great Head: "That they may all be one." The importance of this is seen in the close, "That the world may believe that thou didst send me." Can the church do less than make it evident to the world that we are "one in faith and doctrine; one in charity?" Let us, therefore, often say: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity."

Then He prays that these that had been given to Him may in Him behold His glory which the Father had given Him, and He tenderly reminds the Father of the eternal love with which the Father loved Him. He implies that now the Father must love those that are in Him. It is as a groom bringing His bride to His Father's house and expecting her to share the love that has been extended to

him by his parents. Then He prays that God may vouchsafe to His followers that love that the Father had for Him.

Friday

§ 136. Jesus in Gethsemane. Mat. 26: 36-46; Mark 14: 32-42; Luke 22: 39-46; John 18: 1.

Who prefers to write on "Jesus in Gethsemane?" One could with better grace speak in hushed tones. The scene is so solemn! The agony undergone by "The Man of Sorrows" has never been experienced by another. The gloom of His soul, made all the darker by the night which enveloped Him and His sleeping disciples, cannot be penetrated by the dim light of reason. Any attempt to explain what transpired in the "Garden" seems as inappropriate as were the "swords and staves" carried by that base multitude which had armed itself to apprehend Him who bade Peter "Put up again thy sword into the place." So as we approach Gethsemane we shall take off our shoes and speak in subdued tones. Our reasonings, and especially our words, may seem as intrusive as was the traitor's kiss upon the Saviour's solitude.

The Gospels simply tell the story. That is enough. Yet the irreverent have dared to maintain that Gethsemane saw imperfection in Christ. They would have Him more stoical. But "He became an example for gentle womanhood, and tender childhood, as well as man boastful of his stoicism." Before Pilate He was firm; upon the Cross He "won the adoration of a fellowsufferer and the confession of a Roman soldier." His fortitude has made those who love Him "stronger to endure tortures than were emperors and inquisitors to invent them." G. A. Chadwick, D.D.

Here we behold enacted the "Terrible Drama of the night." The Saviour, as He sweat "great drops of blood" (Lk. 22: 44), is alone. The dense darkness and the grief, which acted as an anodyne to rest and sleep for the disciples, only added to His desolateness and pain. The "cup" could not pass from Him. The disciples could not watch with Him. He drank the dreadful draught to the dregs, destitute.

Outline. Mark.

I. The Seclusion of the Saviour. (vs. 33-35.)
   1. From Judas and his associates—*Antipathy.*
   2. From "the eight" (vs. 32, 33)—*Apathy.*
   3. From "the three" (v. 35)—*Sympathy.*

II. The Sorrow of the Saviour. (vs. 33, 34.)
   1. "Greatly amazed" (v. 33)—*Surprised.*
   2. "Sore troubled" (v. 33)—*Desolation.*
   3. "Exceeding sorrowful" (v. 34)—*Deluge.*

III. The Supplication of the Saviour. (vs. 35-39.)
   1. For release. (v. 35.)
   2. In resignation. (v. 36.)
   3. A repetition. (v. 39.)

IV. The Sleep of the Disciples. (vs. 37-41.)
   1. Power of it. (v. 37.)
   2. Perplexity caused by it. (v. 37.)
   3. Place for it. (v. 41.)

It was past midnight on that last Thursday night of our Lord's life before the crucifixion. The Passover Supper had been prepared and eaten. Christ had rebuked the disciples by washing their feet. Judas, the traitor, had been designated and had withdrawn. The Lord's supper had been instituted. The closing prayer had been offered. And then "when they had sung an hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives."

As the "Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief" approached the supreme test, the trying ordeal of Calvary, He found Himself alone, torn by soul agony. But though forsaken, He was not alone indeed. Prayer connected Him with heaven.

I. The Seclusion of the Saviour. (vs. 33-35.)

32. "They came unto a place." "Place" means an enclosed piece of ground, "a garden," in the Eastern sense, a "lowly, quiet, summer retreat, connected with, or near by, the 'Olive press.'" The Saviour sought a sequestered spot for His season of sorrow.

"Gethsemane"—"Passing out by the north gate of the Temple. . . . descend into a lonely part of the valley of black

Kidron, at that season swelled into a winter torrent. Crossing it, turn somewhat to the left, where the road leads towards Olivet. . . . Turn aside. . . . to the right and reach what tradition has since earliest times pointed out as 'Gethsemane —The Oil-Press.' "

From the "Garden of Eden" the First Adam was driven defeated; from the "Garden of Gethsemane" the second Adam was led as a prisoner, yet, strange paradox, a Victor. In the solitude of the Garden He had won a moral victory greater than which there never was another.

His disciples. The eight were left behind as the context shows. It has been pointed out that there is no record ever of Christ praying *with* his disciples. He gave them a form of prayer, but when He had occasion to pray He said, "Sit ye here, while I pray"—. Evidently their presence and prayers would have been no help to Him. No one would think of accusing the Master of partiality. The eight were simply not needed in His company while He prayed. He knew them. It were best for Him, for His cause and maybe for them, that they be at a distance from Him during His agonizing prayers.

v. 33. "He taketh with Him Peter and James and John." "Companions before of His glory, both when He raised the daughter of Jairus and on the Mount of Transfiguration."—*Edersheim.* Whatever fellowship he might crave; whatever consolation He might covet, these three were the natural ones to give it to Him. What Christian would not desire this preferred place? Surely it is laudable to long to be in the "Inner Circle," to be one of the "elect of His election."

v. 35. "And he went forward a little." He left the three, but they were near. It was only "a little" distance between Him and them. Evidently He desired them to be at hand even though they could not help Him carry His load. Christ appreciated companionship. He was perfectly human as well as perfectly divine.

II. The Sorrow of the Saviour. (vs. 33, 34.)

v. 33b. "Began to be greatly amazed." The Greek word (ekthambeisthai) here used indicates that Jesus met that which surprised Him. Wyclif has it "began to dread."

The word is used in 9:15 to describe the amazement of the people when they saw the Lord after the Transfiguration. Also in 16:5, 6, it is applied to the women at the sepulchre. —*Cambridge Bible.*

"Sore troubled." In Philippians 2:26 the word is rendered "full of heaviness." "Buttmann suggests that the root idea is that of being "away from home" and so "confused," "beside one's self." The main notion seems to be that Christ was *desolate.* His isolation pained Him. Those most intimate with Him were far from appreciating His distress.

v. 34. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." "Perilypos" is the Greek word here used. It signifies not simply a shower of sorrow, but a deluge. It seems to the Master as though He will be buried beneath the ever increasing weight of grief. "Even unto death" suggests that He saw death stalking before Him. Was the load of the sins of the race being laid upon His shoulders with such incalculable ponderosity that it endangered the life of even the God-man? Or, as some think, was Satan attempting to take His life ere He atoned for our sins? We rejoice that as Hebrews 5:7 says, "When he had offered up prayers and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." "Abide ye here and watch." Though Jesus must fight out the battle alone yet He will be comforted to believe that some care. They can at least watch to see how it goes with Him. They can listen while He prays. They can be eager for His victory.

III. The Supplication of the Saviour. (vs. 35-39.)

v. 35b. "And fell on the ground and prayed." The fact that Jesus "fell upon the ground" indicates how strongly the sorrow had taken hold upon Him. He was nearly overwhelmed by it. The fact that He prayed as He did shows His need of support above the human. "If it were possible." So Jesus prayed. The Greek conditional here used indicates that Jesus saw such a possibility. Verse 36 seems to teach the same thing. "The hour might pass away from him." How long that hour must have seemed. During periods of intense pain, minutes seem to be hours and hours weeks or months. Jesus prayed, at first, for "surcease of sorrow,"

for the ending of that seemingly interminable time of torture.

v. 36. "Abba Father." Matthew 26:39 has "O my Father," etc. Luke 22:42 has "Father," etc., as also has John 12:27. On this passage St. Jerome wrote in Latin "dicitque blandiens; Mi Pater;" i. e., "And He says *coaxing,* My Father." What pleading! How His appeal must have touched the heart of our Father God, whom Jesus came to reveal. Cold calculating critics have seen too much sentiment and too little strength in our Saviour here, but, as Chadwick in the Expositors Bible suggests, Jesus had a sensitive soul. He was sinless. His heart had never been calloused. He did not attempt to act unnaturally and affect a hardihood past his real feelings. Then He was and is the Saviour of the women and children as well as the stoical men. So He candidly displayed His true self.

"All things are possible unto thee." So we sometimes pray. "God is able" is a true acknowledgment of divine omnipotence, yet God does not always grant our particular petitions, for to do so would not be to our best interests. "Remove this cup." How bitter the cup and how much it contained! "Howbeit, not what I will but what thou wilt." No longer for relief from the hour, but in resignation He prays. This "howbeit" marks the moment of victory. Following this abandonment to God's will Luke 22:43 states "And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him." This is a beautiful human touch from Luke, whose next verse tells us that Christ so agonized that "His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground."

v. 39. "Prayed, saying the same words." He had won a great moral victory. He took a stand and stood there. He did not revise His word nor reverse His decision. What grand constancy and consistency!

IV. The Sleep of the Disciples. (vs. 37-41.)

v. 37. "He cometh and findeth them sleeping." From His agonizing supplication He turned to His disciples for solace, but found them sleeping. Says Edersheim, "While He lay in prayer, they lay in sleep; and yet where soul-agony leads not to the one, it often induces the other."

"Saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou?" etc. Doubtless these words roused all the sleepers. They indicate the surprise of the suffering Saviour. Do we ever sleep when we should be wakeful in the interests of our Master? "Watch one hour." Just one hour, yet it was too long for the weary disciples. How limited is the strength of man! How scanty is our reserve power!

v. 38. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Jesus warns Peter and his associates of coming temptation, which may be warded off by watching, anticipating, its approach, and prayer, petitioning heaven to help. By "watching" we do our share to keep from yielding to temptation; by "prayer" we obtain God's aid to help us.

"The spirit is willing;" i. e., ready, ardent. One may be aglow with enthusiasm, yet if this is only human, it will be offset because "the flesh is weak." We need prayer to keep us in contact with God and so "strong in the Lord and the power of His might."

v. 41. "Sleep on now, and take your rest." These words were a rebuke to their languor, their stupidity, their seeming indifference. Yet they were in place. Why should they be awake after the victory had been won if they slept during the battle? All may sleep when the work is done, when the task is completed. "After three assaults had the Tempter left Him in the wilderness; after the threefold conflict in the Garden he was vanquished. Christ came forth triumphant."—*Edersheim.*

"The hour is come." He had prayed to be saved from the "hour" but strange as it may seem, the prayer that He had hoped would save Him from that hour only prepared Him for it. So He bravely faces the "hour."

"The Son of man is betrayed." Judas had bargained with "sinners" for his Lord's life. Eager for money always, coveting even what loving hearts spent on the Person of Christ, he now realizes a few paltry dollars, "Tainted money," "blood money," in exchange for our Lord's life. And, sad, it is, though all too true, Judas was not the last to barter Christ for money. Money is valued because it can be exchanged for "things," but he that has Christ possesses "everything."

"Arise, let us be going." Since all were awake, and Jesus had won in Gethsemane, why tarry there? He seems eager to go on undaunted to the last long day of His pre-crucifixion life. He is ready to lay down His life.

§ 137. The Betrayal and Arrest. Mat. 27: 47-56; Mark 14: 43-52; Luke 22: 47-53; John 18: 1-12.

The betrayal and arrest of our Master was a dark deed. Jesus was in the Garden at Gethsemane, deserted by His disciples who had gone to sleep. In the desolation of His own soul, He had enacted the terrible drama of the night. Afterward, having fought out the battle alone, He had awakened His disciples with the words, "Sleep on now and take your rest." Then He had warned them that the traitor was at hand. Judas, who had been one of the twelve, approached Him with a great multitude, carrying swords and staves, having been sent from the chief priests and elders of the people. Judas saluted Jesus with, "Hail, Rabbi," and a kiss of endearment; or, as Matthew indicates, "he kissed Him much." The picture represents foul play and was so seen by the rugged Peter, whose soul was so stirred that he retaliated with the sword, but Jesus touched the ear that Peter had severed and healed it. His rebuke to Peter was telling. Jesus had fought out the battle as Peter slept and needed not the rugged apostle's sword, as He could have called on the Father, who would have sent Him more than twelve legions of angels, but then the Scriptures would not have been fulfilled. So He permitted Himself to be taken. When those who were taking Jesus attempted to take a certain young man (Mark 14: 51), "he fled naked." This young man was evidently Mark, the writer of the second Gospel.

§ 138. The Trial Before the Jewish Authorities. Mat. 26: 57—27: 10; Luke 22: 54-71; John 18: 12-27; Mark 14: 53-72.

This band that had seized Jesus brought Him to Annas whom Christ disdained. This Annas was the father-in-law

of Caiaphas. He evidently was a political diplomat, somewhat greedy for filthy lucre. When the high priest, Caiaphas, asked Jesus of His disciples and His teaching, He was reminded by the Master that He had taught openly in the temple and the synagogue so that His teaching was generally known, since in secret He had spoken nothing. While Jesus was on trial, Peter denied His Lord.

The self-possession of the Master in the presence of Caiaphas is admirable. "Jesus held His peace," then, when the high priest adjured Him by the living God to tell whether or not He was the Son of the living God, He simply stated, "Thou hast said," telling with this a prophecy of His coming power and glory when He will return in the clouds. Thereupon the high priest charged Him of blasphemy. Then He was turned over to the ribald soldiery to be spit upon, buffeted and smitten. Then Peter's denial had become complete by the three-fold repetition. The cock crew; the Lord turned and looked upon Peter who wept bitterly. Judas, when he saw that Jesus had been condemned, repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver with the statement, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." Matthew's statement of 27:3, 4 seems to indicate that it had gone harder with Jesus than Judas had imagined it would. The high priest would have nothing to do with his repentance and so Judas suffered his remorse alone. We are here reminded of Esau's unavailing tears and of the line "To pass that limit is to die."

§ 139. Christ Before Pilate. Mat. 27: 11-31; Mark 15: 1-20; Luke 23: 1-25; Jno. 18: 28-19; 16a.

It will be helpful in studying the trial of Christ before Pilate, to consider the outstanding characters:

Judas—Before Christ's trial had been completed, Judas had repented of his traitorous deed. Yet his repentance was not of godly sorrow. He was remorseful. He suffered from a remorse caused by the memory of the bald fact of his traitorous act. All the glamour had gone, the lure had been lost. He found his soul sullied, and so he came back to the Sanhedrists, throwing the cankered gold at their

feet. Little wonder that remorse gnawed at the very vitals of his being as he contemplated how his traitorous kiss had started Christ to Annas, thence to Caiaphas, thence to Pilate, thence to Herod, and then back to Pilate again, to be scourged, delivered, and finally crucified. Judas had lost Christ, and then lost his gold, his good name, and finally his life, for he died a suicide.

The Sanhedrists. They stand for envy which had filled hearts empty of reality. Jesus said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John 18:37. These leading religionists did not hear his voice and hence were not of the truth. They were shams, putting forth a false front. They were shells, hollow, though promising.

Pilate. Regardless of his good intentions and apparent innocence, we cannot escape concluding that Pilate was an opportunist. As we study him, we note that he was double-minded, and hence "unstable in all his ways." He was accustomed to diplomacy, but he never before was compelled to decide a matter so fraught with far-reaching possibilities for gain or loss to himself, as when Christ was pitted against Cæsar, and he was compelled to choose. He favored as well as feared Christ. He was influenced by his conviction, his better judgment, to release Jesus. Said he, "I find no fault in this man" and "What evil hath he done?" Then his conscience troubled him when he thought of delivering Christ for crucifixion. As Matthew 27:13, 14 suggest, Pilate simply marvelled at Christ's conduct when put to the "acid test." Then Pilate's wife, by telling him of her dream had awakened his conscience.

We note here that he refused to be responsible for the disposition of the Saviour of man, and so indicated this by washing his hands. Ordinarily this would have caused any crowd to relinquish their demand for the death of one on trial, but not so this clamorous mob, incited by the Jewish leaders. Had Pilate been other than irresponsible, he doubtless would never have delivered Jesus instead of Barabbas, but when he utters, "Ye call him King of the Jews," (Mark 15:12), he indicates that he is taking no side. And so he is synonymous with moral flabbiness, and as Mark says, "Wishing to content the multitude," he released Barabbas

and delivered Christ. But though he favored the Jews' cause and Cæsar's cause as he thought, he actually opposed Cæsar by releasing the murderous seditionist, Barabbas.

Pilate's wife, embodies that which is true but impotent. *The multitude.* The multitude is fickle, furious, and easily excited. They cry "Crucify him," today, who yesterday cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David." *The soldiers.* These were evidently bloodthirsty degenerates who gloried in ribaldry. *Christ.* Impossible it is to approach any portrait of Christ in Pilate's Hall, but we cannot but note how, both while in the custody of Caiaphas the high priest and that of Pilate the governor, he was subjected to the most uncalled-for ill-treatment. He was falsely accused, spit upon, smitten with the hand, and taunted, to say nothing of being charged with disloyalty to the State and being seditious. It was made to appear that he who followed Christ was disloyal to Cæsar. Christ here became the victim of the most unfair and inhuman treatment.

Outline Mat. 27

I. Christ Opposed by a Religious System. (v. 1.)
   a. Personnel—"Chief priests and elders."
   b. Plan—"Took counsel against Jesus."
   c. Purpose—"To put him to death."

II. Christ Face to Face with the Roman State. (vs. 2:11-14.)
   a. "Delivered."
   b. Questioned by Pilate. (v. 11.)
   c. "Accused" by chief priests and elders. (v. 12.)
   d. Held his peace. (vs. 13, 14.)

III. Christ Encounters Roused Public Sentiment. (vs. 15-26.)
   a. Crowd catered to—"whom they would." (v. 15.)
   b. Custom clung to—"whom will ye" (v. 17.)
   c. Crucifixion of Christ called for. (vs. 22, 23.)

IV. Christ Insulted by Ribald Soldiers. (vs. 27-31.)
   a. In the Prætorium. (v. 27.)
   b. His Apparel changed. (v. 28.)
   c. His Person abused. (vs. 29, 30.)

I. Christ Opposed by a Religious System. (v. 1.) "When morning was come." The morning after our Lord's ordeal in Gethsemane. "All the chief priests and elders." The religious leaders of Jesus' day were combined. Note especially here the use of all. If this group was divided on many points of doctrine or polity, it was nevertheless united on one point at least. "Took counsel against Jesus." A concerted plan is indicated. This was directed against Jesus, their best friend, and only Saviour. "To put him to death." Organized religion rallied to do away with Him who was the Founder, the Center and Circumference of the only religion which does what a religion promises to do. His life was above reproach; His teaching was the highest, yet He encountered the entrenched opposition of leaders, supposed to provide the best in religion.

II. Christ Face to Face with the Roman State. (vs. 2:11-14.)

2. "And they bound him." As though they needed to. As if they had a right to. His citizenship rights were disregarded. His power was not respected. How easily He who brake the bands of death, could have rent asunder their flimsy cords. Led him away. "The Lion of the tribe of Judah" was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa. 53:7b). "Delivered him up to Pilate the governor." (Paradidomi) delivered is the same Greek word as is used of Judas betraying his Lord. (Luke 22:48.) Judas betrayed Him to the Jewish leaders and these "betrayed" Him to the Roman governor whom they forced to have Him crucified. 11. "Jesus stood before the governor." He who is both Lawgiver and Judge stood as a culprit before this Roman official, who proved quite unequal to the occasion. One day Pilate will stand before Christ as Judge, and the former will be as fairly dealt with as if he had released Jesus. Precious confidence made possible by His lofty life! "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Edersheim notes in Pilate's question, as in his bearing, a "mixture of contempt, cynicism and awe." Pilate took it for granted that, as the Sanhedrists represented, Jesus claimed to be King. John 18:33-38 gives the most complete account of what passed between Jesus and Pilate here. If Pilate were cynical or

playful at first, Jesus at once brought him to seriousness by asking "Sayest thou this of thyself?" Christ tried to get Pilate to speak for himself, to be a responsible character. Pilate's answer was, "Am I a Jew?" Thus he would brush aside the issue so as not to make it personal. Jesus' admission that He was a King was accompanied by the explanation, "My Kingdom is not of this world." He was no competitor of Cæsar. He was at Pilate's mercy. His "forces," His "armies," His "body-guard" were in heaven. No one need fear Him. Only foolish men would oppose with force Him who did not resort to force. Yet he was a King. His realm was *truth. He* had come to earth to tell of His kingdom. And, sad to relate, the leaders of religion *heard not His voice* and so evidently were not *of the truth,* to which Pilate also was a stranger.

v. 12. "Accused . . . he answered nothing." He was not there to debate with prejudiced priests, but to die for our sins. So He conserved His strength for the cruel Cross. Thus to its torments He was keenly sensible.

v. 13. "Pilate saith unto him, Hearest thou not?" "As He stood in the calm silence of His majesty, Pilate greatly wondered. Did this man not even fear death. . . . There was that in Christ which, perhaps for the first time in his life, had made him reluctant to be unrighteous and unjust.—*Edersheim.*

v. 14. "He gave him no answer." Our Saviour carefully chose His words when He spoke. He did not always speak. With Him truth was paramount. His freedom, or even His life, dear to Him as to us, paled into insignificance beside truth. Jesus so spoke that He left no occasion for regrets. "The governor marveled greatly." Pilate had never before seen the like. He was perplexed. Eager to shift the responsibility of passing judgment on such a character, Pilate gladly turned Jesus over to Herod, who was at Jerusalem for the feast, as soon as he learned that Jesus was from Galilee.

III. Christ Encounters Roused Public Sentiment. (vs. 15-26.)

v. 15. "The governor was wont to release . . . one prisoner, whom they would." A restless Jewish "multitude" is curious to witness some popular prisoner set free. The

crowd determines which one of the prisoners shall be liberated.

v. 16. "A notable prisoner Barabbas." He "belonged to that class, not uncommon at the time, which, under the colorable pretence of political aspirations, committed robbery and other crimes." Edersheim asks, "Was he a political Anti-Christ?" The fact that he was suggested rather than one of the malefactors, who was crucified with Christ, suggests that each was charged with the same thing in a general way. At least each was a prominent prisoner. But the Jews, not altogether unfriendly to those that made trouble for Rome's rulers, naturally favored Barabbas, regardless of his real character.

v. 17. "They were gathered together." The many Jews that had come to the Feast of the Passover. "Whom will ye that I release?" It is quite clear that Christ's fate was in the hands of a mob which was being incited by the Jewish leaders to clamor for His life. "Barabbas or Jesus." Against the former there were such grave charges; against Jesus there was no real ground for a charge as Pilate soon discovered, and repeatedly stated. There was no basis for comparison, yet they were contrasted. Evidently Pilate hoped that Jesus' superiority of character and conduct would vindicate Him, but Jewish prejudice could not be persuaded.

v. 18. "He knew that for envy they had delivered him up." Pilate saw He was superior to His accusers. Had they given Him fair play, He would easily have carried the people with Him at all times, as in fact He usually did. Jealousy was the predominating motive which impelled the Sanhedrists to engage in propaganda against Jesus as Pilate viewed the matter.

v. 19. "He was sitting on the judgment-seat." Ready to pass a sentence that hurt his conscience. "His wife sent unto him, saying—" Pilate's wife evidently had much influence over him. Quite likely he had discussed with her this Jesus who was known quite generally by this time. "Have nothing to do with that righteous man." Here is advice with a vengeance. In her decisive statement she makes it clear that her husband should "keep hands off"

Christ and that Jesus is a "righteous man." Here is a case of where a prominent man could have learned of his wife. Certainly her message stirred his conscience and at least delayed conviction of the Master. "Suffered many things. . . in a dream because of him." "An omen such as a dream, and an appeal connected with it, especially under the circumstances of that trial, would powerfully impress a Roman."—*Edersheim.*

v. 20. "Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitude." Did the message of Pilate's wife seem to turn the tide? At least these religious leaders appear to be especially energetic in their opposition just at this point, if a sequence of events is here listed. Evidently the multitude was incited by the Sanhedrists as they wormed in and out among the crowd, carrying on their fiendish propaganda against Christ.

v. 21. "But the governor answered. . . ? And they said, Barabbas." As one has written, "In vain Pilate expostulated, reasoned, appealed. Popular frenzy only grew as it was opposed." The governor could not carry the crowd. He was being carried out by the relentless tide of religious opposition. With unabated zeal the enemies of Christ had wrought until public sentiment had been aroused against Him.

v. 22. "What then shall I do unto Jesus?" In the A. V. we have "with Jesus." From this question many a sermon has been preached. Thus put, it is the question of the age, being equivalent to "What think ye of Christ?" Beloved, our treatment of Christ marks us. He is the touchstone of the race. Our reaction to Him determines our destiny. "They all say, Let him be crucified." In unison they utter their fearful verdict. Here we witness the most heartless, unaccountable rejection ever recorded on the pages of history. The decrees that bade Socrates drink the hemlock and Huss die at the stake were not in the same class as this cold, calculated, merciless, as well as groundless, decision.

v. 23. "Why, what evil hath he done?" In vain does the Roman governor, with his innate and trained regard for a man's record as manifest in deeds, appeal to that flawless life of good works. Not a blot mars the page of that white

life. But this avails nothing to save a life, about to be laid down for the race. "They cried out exceedingly." They do not simply "say" here, but "cry out exceedingly." They seem blood-thirsty. They vent their venom. The stream has become a torrent. They say, "Let him be crucified," with all the fervor of their combined passions. They need not repeat. Pilate understands that they will have Christ's blood.

v. 24. "Pilate saw." Their conduct was so unmistakable as to its significance that Pilate knew that further efforts to stem the tide of their fury would be futile. They had "passed the limit." "He took water and washed his hands before the multitude." As Deuteronomy 21:6 shows, Pilate surely knew this was a Jewish rite. He could not wash away his own guilt, but by his act he made the guilt of the Jews the greater. Certainly Pilate's conduct, as a whole, indicated that Christ had made a deep impression upon him. "See ye to it." When Judas returned the money paid him for a traitor's work, the chief priests and elders received his confession with the words, "See thou to it." Now these words are hurled back at them. The boomerang soon returned.

v. 25. "And all the people answered." We read that "after the solemn washing of hands of the elders and their disclaimer of guilt, priests responded with this prayer: "Forgive it to Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, O Lord, and lay not innocent blood upon Thy people Israel!" About thirty years later among the 3,600 "victims of the Governor's fury" were many noble citizens of Jerusalem. Some were scorned and crucified, near the Prætorium. A little later hundreds of Jews were crucified within sight of Jerusalem. And yet eternal vengeance is meted on the Jew and his children!

v. 26. "Released . . . Barabbas," and thus gratified the multitude. "But Jesus he scourged and delivered to be crucified." The scourging should have been enough to appease the Jews, for it was sufficiently horrible to satisfy the most vengeful. "Stripped of his clothes, his hands tied and back bent, the victim would be bound to a column or

stake in front of the Prætorium." Then would be inflicted that "intermediate death."

IV. Christ Insulted by the Ribald Soldiers (vs. 27-31).

v. 27. "Then the soldiers . . . took Jesus into the palace." But not to care for His wounds nor to comfort Him. They simply made Him the object of their jesting and that in the "palace." "Whole band." All are called in lest some should miss the merrymaking at the expense of the "meek and lowly Jesus." Not one soldier ventured to insist that Jesus should be respected. At least the narrative records no championing of His cause.

v. 28. "And they stripped him." Deprived of His liberty and all that life naturally holds dear, Jesus is not even permitted to be the custodian of His own clothes. Not even His personal modesty is regarded. Ruthlessly and roughly "they stripped him." "Put on him a scarlet robe." The only covering He has is of "scarlet," symbolic of human passions. But we rejoice to believe that one day He will be arrayed in the royal purple—mixture of the red and blue, the heavenly color with which the dome of the skies is tinted.

v. 29. "A crown of thorns." That thorny crown, a reminder of nature's curse (Genesis 3:18), pricked His "Sacred Head." But we impatiently wait to hear the strains, "Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all." "A reed in His right hand." A mock scepter. What is more fragile than a reed? It is so easily "shaken by the wind." But He does and will wield a "scepter of righteousness." Some even now recognize His authority. All must do so some time. "They kneeled down before Him." Sportively, mockingly they knelt to affect worship. Some day these same soldiers will bend the knee to Him in reverence or by compulsion, for "every knee shall bow" to Him. "Hail, King of the Jews." Imagine this coming from husky throats. The intended irony is evident. Little did they think that He will, one day, be recognized by all as "King of kings." Less respect had these Roman soldiers for any "king of the Jews."

v. 30. "They spat on him." When men would show

utter contempt for a person they eject upon him sputum, an excrement of the body. So the pollution of men's corrupt bodies broke upon Him who is worthy of plaudits and praise. "Smote him on the head." He was subjected to the most abusive and taunting treatment. His patience tried, proved to be genuine. We bless Him whom they bruised.

§ 140. The Saviour on the Cross. Mat. 27: 32-56; Mark 15: 21-41; Luke 23: 26-49; Jno. 19: 16b-37.

INTRODUCTION:

Importance of the Cross

The crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ is the most important fact on record. It was the fulfillment of clear prophecy. The twenty-second Psalm, though possibly applicable to certain of David's experiences, is prophetic of the sufferings of our Saviour on the Cross. Isaiah 53 could not refer to any other than Christ. There we see depicted the sufferings of the ideal Servant of Jehovah, and we quote "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed . . . the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all . . . and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." Not only by expressed prophecy, but by type and symbol, the crucifixion of Christ was predicted by the writers of the Old Testament Scripture. So the dying of "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" on the Cross of Golgotha was the fulfillment of prophecy as well as the focal point of history, for just as all before points to the Cross, so all of revealed religion since that time points back to "the old rugged Cross." Then we shall think of the crucifixion of our Lord as the finality in religion. This is the last word in divine love and sacrifice. While the birth and life of Christ meant "God with us," Emmanuel, His death meant "God instead of us."

The Victim, Christ

Before meditating upon the Saviour on the Cross, let us consider His physical unfitness for the ordeal of crucifixion;

His spiritual vigor in spite of His weakened condition; and then just what crucifixion was. We recall that Christ had not partaken of food since the Passover Feast. He had on the occasion of the Last Supper anticipated the betrayal; had seen Judas go forth into the darkness alone; had led forth His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane; and had fought the battle in loneliness while great drops of blood oozed out of His pores; had been betrayed by the kiss of one whom He called a "friend"; had been taken before Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again; had been abused and even scourged, and then had attempted to bear His own Cross, only to be relieved by the unwilling Simon of Cyrene. So naturally He came to the most excruciating type of death exhausted physically.

The Vigor of Christ

Yet we marvel at the spiritual vigor which He displayed, for as Luke records, while He was bearing the Cross the women bewailed and lamented Him, but instead of accepting their commiseration He bade them "weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Luke 23:28). Even in His humiliation and physical weakness He had time to foresee with pangs of heart the fact that the people whom He loved, who were sending Him to the Cross, would ere long be subjected to treatment of the same kind as He was receiving.

Crucifixion

Crucifixion is of all deaths the most horrible, and possibly the most painful. The Jews did not practice crucifixion; the Romans seem to have gotten it through the Phœnicians. The Crucifixion was after this manner. The upright piece was firmly set in the ground, and the victim was then with extended arms tied to the cross-piece, to which his hands were spiked. Then by means of ladders and ropes he was raised to a position so that his feet would be about a foot from the ground. The cross-bar was then either tied or nailed to the upright. Then the torturing rest was placed beneath him, and his feet were stretched down and either spiked through with one long nail or each separately nailed

to the Cross. Thus the unfortunate victim would hang until death would come as a tardy relief. The heart of many a hardened sinner has been broken in contemplating that the Saviour went through this ordeal. It is our object in this lesson to gaze on the sublime scene of Calvary. Let us together in the words of Isaiah 42:1, "Behold the Lord's Servant." It is not our purpose to misplace our emphasis and be lost in a shallow sentimentalism as we see only the physical suffering of Christ, but we shall look through that and beyond to the realities back of and manifest through the Crucified Christ.

I. His Human Relations Fully Met. Luke 23:33-43; John 19:25-27.

(1) He forgave His crucifiers (vs. 33, 34). "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

v. 33. "The Skull." The likelihood is that Golgatha was shaped as a human skull, rather than that skulls were scattered over it. "They crucified him." As described above. "The malefactors." The two wicked men of whom we shall have more to say later.

v. 34. "Father, forgive them." F. W. Robertson points out that two things are implied in this prayer:

(a) Sin needs forgiveness;
(b) Forgiveness can be granted.

Sin must be forgiven or a penalty, possibly in the form of retribution, will follow. And then if sin is not forgiven, the conscience will continue to smite. But on the Cross Christ wrought out forgiveness for us, so that none need be weighed down by the burden of guilt. "They know not what they do." Christ's desire was that all who participated in His crucifixion ignorantly should be forgiven. For us to recall that He was suffering the agonies incident to that type of death, makes it all the more marvelous that He could pray for those who were torturing Him. To do so was sublime.

(2) He is silent at their scoffing and mocking (vs. 35-38). The fact that Christ said nothing here is most expressive of His character.

v. 35. "The people stood beholding, and the rulers also scoffed at him." The likelihood is that the rulers . . . that is, the religious leaders of the Jews . . . had gone to the Feast, but upon hearing that Pilate had placed over Him the title, "The King of the Jews," they hastened to the scene, lest the Crucifixion of Christ would react upon them. They well knew that the multitudes passing to and from the Feast would look with wonder upon the gory scene, and recount the good deeds of Him whom they had crucified. And so they scattered themselves among the crowd to incite the scoffing. "He saved others." Here they spake truly, and by His remaining on the Cross He was saving the lost. "Let him save himself." Had Christ replied in power to this challenge, and come down from the cross, we would not today be enjoying salvation through grace.

v. 36. "The soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar." Edersheim is of the opinion that this offering of vinegar was an act of mercy on the part of the soldiery, inasmuch as this vinegar, or sour wine, was given to lessen the pain, but that the soldiers participated in the mocking because of the spirit engendered by the Jewish rulers.

v. 37. "The King of the Jews." This utterance by the Roman soldiers was as much a slur to the Jews as it was to Christ. In it there is bitter irony.

v. 38. "A superscription." It is to be observed that the Four Gospels vary this superscription. A number of satisfactory explanations can be given for this. One is that Matthew gives the Latin, Mark the Greek, and John the Aramaion or Hebrew superscription. Then as Sidney Collett holds, "A perfect and full view of Christ and His teaching can only be obtained by taking the four accounts together, so here it is the combined accounts that give us the total sum of the wording of the superscription as written in the three languages." The main part of the superscription was "The King of the Jews," and each of the Four Gospels give us this. Probably the full superscription was, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

(3) He promised Paradise to the penitent thief (vs. 39-43).

v. 39. "One . . . railed on him." This malefactor did what malefactors ordinarily did. He simply gave vent to his ill disposition, as aggravated by the suffering and abuse of the cross.

v. 40. "But the other answered and rebuking him said." In striking contrast to the former is the latter. To him the scene was an occasion to "fear God."

v. 41. "We indeed justly . . . but this man has done nothing amiss." In this statement we see a confession of sin and an expression of faith in Christ. The awful fact of Christ crucified had gripped the heart and mind of this sinful man, and had lifted him into the realm of faith.

v. 42. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Christ's conduct on the Cross had at least won this man to Him. We here contemplate the influence of Christ. So far as the record goes, the Lord Jesus did not attempt to do personal work with His fellow-sufferers, but He did, by His blameless conduct, win this malefactor to Himself and to faith in His coming kingdom. But He did not win the other.

v. 43. "Verily I say unto thee." The Lord Jesus responded to the faith of the needy one even though His body was racked with agony.

(4) *He provides for His mother* (John 19:25-27). "Woman behold thy son." "Behold thy mother."

With Christ the amenities of life were not forgotten, even though He was in the tortures of this most excruciating of deaths. He provided for His mother and manifested fidelity to His faithful friend John. As we read the parallel accounts and note what John has omitted, we infer that he had left the crucifixion scene and had gone to bring the mother of our Lord to the scene of the crucifixion. When Jesus saw her, He took thought for her and committed her to John in the loving words quoted above. And the narrative reads, "From that hour the disciple took her unto his own home." Evidently, John at once took her from the gory scene, for certainly the arrow had pierced her heart. Can we imagine that Christ could have conducted Himself so, if love had not been reigning in His life?

II. His "Work" "Finished" (Luke 23:44, 45).

(1) He senses the separation from God and the suffering from thirst. Above we have considered His response to the welfare of others. It is characteristic of Him that consideration for others preceded that for Himself. Now we note His own feelings and His final dealings on the Cross with His Heavenly Father. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

v. 44. "About the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour." As darkness enveloped the earth, so the human soul of Christ was thrown into the darkness of despair. That was the hour when the Prince of the power of the air with his hosts of demons obscured the sun from the suffering Saviour.

v. 45. "The sun's light failing." This was the time when Jesus uttered "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He felt as though He were alone, for "He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Then again, "Sin had hidden his consciousness of God." For did He not die unto sin once, and although He was not suffering for His own sin, yet inasmuch as He was bearing the sins of the world, is it not likely that this cloud of sin would dim His vision and cause Him to feel and fear that He was separated from God? For it has always been that sin causes the soul to feel that God is far off, if not entirely unapproachable. Soon, as John records, He uttered, "I thirst." As Edersheim suggests, He must have felt His physical energies waning as He approached death, and was eager to be revived, that He might with strength lay down His life. So though He had refused to take the vinegar that would have served as an anesthetic before, yet now He drinks it as it was handed to Him in a sponge on hyssop. This revived Him evidently, and enabled Him to speak, as Mark says, with a "loud voice" as He gave up the Ghost. "The Veil of the Temple was rent." Though so strong that it could hardly be rent, yet as Jesus died the new and living Way was opened up into the Holy of Holies, and the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holiest of all was divided, so that every Christian can now go into the very presence of the Lord.

(2) He commends His spirit to His Father (Luke 23:46). "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." "It is finished" (John 19:30). "Father, into thy hands." When His soul was darkness He had said "My God," but now being quickly revived He says, "Father," as though just for a little He had lost the sense of God being His Father. "Into Thy Hands." These words expressed His confidence in His Father, as though He were starting over a strange way. These words have been used by many a dying saint: Polycarp, Bernard, Huss, Luther and Melanchthon, all uttered these words.

His final words, "It is finished," are freighted with meaning. So these utterances of Christ indicate to us His response when there was enacted the most important scene of human history.

§ 141. The Burial. Mat. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56a; John 19:38-42.

Our Lord's sacrificial death was accompanied by marvelous significant phenomena. The rent veil of the temple, suggesting the ushering in of a spiritual priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9), may have been the result of the same physical force which caused the earth to quake and the rocks to rend.

These unusual happenings, together with the opening of tombs and the raising of the dead, following the three hours of mid-day darkness, provoked the centurion and his associates to fear exceedingly and to say, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Ordinarily the unimaginably painful death of the crucified came at the end of two or three days of most excruciating torture. And since Jesus was crucified on Friday, it seemed evident to the Jews that He would not die before their "high Sabbath." So they asked of Pilate that the legs of Jesus and the malefactors might be broken in order to hasten their death, but certainly not to lessen the full measure of their suffering. "The breaking of the bones was a sort of increase of punishment, by way of compensation for its

shortening by the final stroke that followed."—*Edersheim.* "The soldiers therefore came and brake the legs" of the two malefactors "in keeping with Roman cruelty." But Jesus had died before this added and accumulated brutality could be inflicted upon Him. But one of the soldiers, eager to be sure of His death or to give vent to a degenerate morbidity "pierced his side and straightway there came out blood and water." This John must have witnessed (John 19:35-37).

Geikie is a strong advocate of the opinion that Jesus died of heart rupture. We quote: "That any one should die so soon on the cross, especially one, like Jesus, in the prime of life, and unweakened by previous ill-health, and in such vigor to the last as to utter such a shriek as that with which He expired, appeared even to Christian antiquity to imply some supernatural cause. But the mingled flow of blood and water seems to point unmistakably to another explanation. The immediate cause of death appears, beyond question, to have been the rupture of His heart, brought about by mental agony. Excess of joy or grief is known to induce the bursting of some division of the heart, and the consequent flow of blood into the pericardium, or bag, filled with colorless serum, like water, in which the heart is suspended." The thrust of the soldier's spear permitted the discharge of both fluids. Jesus' "shriek" (Mat. 27:50; Mark 15:37) is explained by the fact that heart rupture is accompanied by a loud cry.

Those mentioned in connection with Jesus' burial are two influential men, either of whom might have manifested more courage during His life, and two devoted women, whose loving constancy surpasses that of even the apostles.

Joseph of Arimathea is described as "rich" (Mat. 27:57), "a councillor" (Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50), "a good and righteous man" (Luke 23:50), "a disciple" (John 19:38). Though he held his discipleship "secretly for fear of the Jews," yet he "went boldly to Pilate" and *asked* for the body of Jesus (Mark 15:43). The crucifixion scene must have given him boldness, or else his riches stood him in good stead. For records of a Roman governor accepting bribe money exist. However this may be the Greek form of

"asked" (the middle voice is used) indicates that Joseph was importunate. His was no formal request, but rather a fervent pleading. His new tomb was suitable for Him whose life was in so many respects unprecedented. His birth was unique, "of a virgin" and "laid in a manger." Ordinarily one crucified was disposed of in the valley of Hinnon, but Joseph gave Jesus a burial more nearly fitting to His sacred body.

Then Nicodemus "who at first came to him by night" came "bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes about a hundred pound weight." The body of Jesus was tenderly released from the cruel cross, sanctified by its holy victim, then it was washed and "bound in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury." Finally, with due dignity and painstaking care Joseph and Nicodemus accomplished the last act of love for, and pressed the last kiss upon Him from whom they had learned while He lived. Nor did those divine lips, pale in death, miraculously open to chide either for any timidity of the past. God, in His abundant mercy, permitted Joseph and Nicodemus, by these loving ministrations, to atone for any previous languor or cowardice. Did He not arrange it that woman, who first ate of the forbidden fruit, should "be saved by her child-bearing"? "The serpent beguiled" Eve, nevertheless she was "the mother of all living." Was not, therefore, the Messiah her descendant on the human side? Thus God's mercy ever "seasons" His justice.

Appropriate indeed it was that Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses, should follow after and behold the tomb and satisfy themselves and their sisters that their Master had proper burial and so was "At Rest." Luke, with characteristic human touch, notes that "they returned and prepared spices, and ointments"; their returning with these enabled them to first learn of the empty tomb and meet the risen Saviour.

§ 142. The Watch at the Sepulchre. Mat. 27: 62-66.

Imagine, if you can, what thoughts filled the minds of men after Jesus had been placed in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. As I write this (July 29, 1925, 9 : 30 p. m.),

I recall that only four hours ago the body of William Jennings Bryan was laid to rest yonder in the National Cemetery at Arlington. In a most eloquent, eulogistic funeral oration (heard over the radio), Rev. Sizoo of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church (the church attended by ten of our Presidents, including Lincoln) recounted the nobility of his life, his faith, etc. He referred to "friends and foes." From the daily press we know what they are saying of the Great Commoner. We observe that his critics are cautious and considerate. They refer to him with kindness, even appreciation. He has championed his last "cause." His crusade for the faith of the boys and girls of Tennessee marked his last battle. He sleeps. None need fear his person now.

Why were the chief priests and Pharisees not minded to let Jesus thus rest? Ah! they recalled His words, "After three days I rise again." If His own disciples had forgotten this prediction, these enemies had not. So they troubled Pilate to make "the sepulchre sure until the third day." Their expressed fear was that His disciples would steal His body and proclaim His resurrection. Pilate, likely impatient about it all, probably still washing his hands, granted them their request. So the grave was sealed and a guard was stationed. Thus the enemies of Jesus played into God's hands and made the resurrection proofs indisputable.

We can only attempt to picture the disappointed Peter, James, John, Nicodemus, Joseph, and the rest, possibly huddled together as sheep, deprived of their Shepherd and fearing the same hungry wolves that had fallen upon Him. Their faith was likely not even a dim hope.

PART IX

The Forty Days

§ 143. The Resurrection Morning. Mat. 28: 1-10; Mark 16: 1-8, 9-11; Luke 23: 56b-24: 12; John 20: 1-18.

INTRODUCTION:

The Resurrection of our Saviour has been called "the master miracle of the ages." It is true that nature never of her own accord returns those who have died. Hence, it was a supernatural power that brought our Lord from the grave. When it is admitted that Christ rose from the dead, then it is easy to believe the Virgin Birth or any other miraculous feature of the life of Christ. Our introduction will include the answer to certain arguments made against the resurrection.

1. It has been stated that the Gospel narratives do not agree in their respective accounts of the resurrection. To this we would reply that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were not intending to furnish the whole history of the resurrection, but only to give evidences of it. Only one writer was an eye-witness. The others wrote from different points of view, making prominent certain particulars.

2. Christ's body was said to be stolen by the disciples. To this we reply that the disciples' characters are a successful refutation of this argument. Then again, these disciples died for the preaching of the resurrection and kindred truth. They surely would not have died for that which they knew was unfounded. Again it is quite clear that the disciples never expected that Jesus would rise, and so would have no object in making it appear that He rose. The fact that they did not believe that He would rise is gathered from their providing spices for His body, the perplexity of the apostles as shown in Luke 24: 19-24, and the plain statement of the Scriptures, John 20: 9.

3. Some have insisted that the body of Christ was stolen by enemies. Had this been so, the enemies would have

silenced Peter and others when they preached the Resurrection. They would have simply produced the body.

4. It has been feebly held that Christ was not really dead. This opinion makes Christ an imposter. According to this, how could we account for the fact that Christ walked to Emmaus with pierced feet? We recall here that the post-resurrection body was different in some respects from the body before crucifixion. That there was an identity is clear from the fact that His body was recognized after the resurrection.

5. Some have held that those who saw Him were mistaken, that they were the victims of nervous imaginations or reflection. To this we reply that the nervous imaginative state referred to does not come on unless the person has been thinking along the lines of the imaginings. As John 20:9 records, the disciples were not contemplating His resurrection.

6. The authenticity of the Gospel accounts has been attacked as being fictitious. We ask here why the disciples should have fabricated a history of something which they did not believe would occur. Then, if they had forged these accounts, they would have been identical in every particular from collusion, but as it is, they are sufficiently different to indicate that they had been separately written.

Having answered these arguments briefly, we maintain that the fact of the Resurrection of our Lord is historically established. The Apostle Paul probed into the subject, and in 1 Corinthians 15 cites between 500 and 600 witnesses whose characters are beyond question.

Exposition of John 20:1-18

I. *Mary Magdalene at the Tomb* (v. 1).

v. 1. "On the first day of the week." In the early morning "while it was yet dark." As soon as the Jewish Sabbath had ended Mary and other women hurried off with their spices to preserve the body of Him whom they loved. "Mary Magdalene." Eidersheim records that it is at least a curious coincidence that the relatives and friends of the deceased were in the habit of going to the grave up to the third day, so as to make sure that those laid there were really

dead. Jesus had liberated Mary Magdalene, and she had given Him such care during His life that she naturally felt the more keenly the loss in His death. *"The stone."* The stone was rolled away by an angel of the Lord who had descended from Heaven. Doubtless the Master in His resurrection body needed not to have the stone rolled away, but had it been left there and the tomb empty, it might have implied what was no longer true. So we can fancy the surprise of the women as they saw the dark open entrance, instead of the stone.

II. *Her report to Peter and John.*

v. 2. "She runneth and cometh to Simon Peter." Mary, greatly excited, evidently hastened to the chief apostles with her startling news. Apparently Peter and John lived at different places. "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb." This statement indicates that Mary at this time did not know that the Lord had risen, but supposed that His body had been removed. "We know not where they have laid him." The plural "we" indicates that Mary was not alone at this time. Her statement clearly shows that she had no expectation that He would arise. Hence her state of mind was not that of joy, but rather of grief.

III. *Peter and John go to the Tomb* (vs. 3-9).

v. 3. "Peter therefore went forth." It was Mary's message that started the men toward the tomb. We note here that the women were more active than the men, and that the latter's lethargy was disturbed by Mary's message. It is interesting that Peter and John, who had been the closest to the Master, were the first of the disciples to approach the tomb.

v. 4. "They ran both together." What thoughts must have filled their minds! "The other disciple outran Peter." John was younger and likely more active than Peter. We can hardly imagine that his fleetness was due to a greater love.

v. 5. "And stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying." John was curious, and so peered into the sepulchre to first discover the startling fact that Christ was

no longer wrapped in linen clothes. "Yet entered he not in." John's hesitancy was likely due to awe and reverence.

v. 6. "Simon Peter . . . entered the tomb." Naturally bolder than John, Peter would be more likely to rush in to the sacred sepulchre than his more sensitive companion. In this race to the tomb, and subsequent entrance, we have a fine character display of Peter and John. "He beholdeth the linen clothes lying." The Greek word here is "theoreo," which indicates that he steadfastly gazed upon the sight.

v. 7. "The napkin . . . not lying with the linen clothes, but rolled up." The Master had left the tomb not with haste, but after leaving things in good order.

v. 8. "The other disciple . . . saw and believed." Whatever had been John's thoughts as he ran toward the tomb or after Mary Magdalene had borne him the news of its emptiness, it seems quite clear that he had not come to the point of faith until he had himself seen the tomb. Then he believed. Surely he here believed that the Lord had risen. It is as though, being near the Master, he had remembered His words and now comprehended their meaning.

v. 9. "As yet they knew not the Scripture that he must rise from the dead." John as well as Peter and the other disciples had not comprehended what Jesus had taught relative to His Resurrection. It was only after they had gone into the empty tomb that they began to wonder and maybe believe in the possibility of His resurrection. He had either risen or He had been taken from the tomb. There were only two alternatives.

IV. *Mary at the Tomb* (vs. 10-17).

v. 10. "The disciples went away." Peter and John could do nothing better than go home. Probably they did not want to attract attention to the empty tomb until they had located their Master. Likely they went to seek the other apostles and talk over the wonderful happenings.

v. 11. "But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping." She knew only the empty tomb, and this was poor consolation to her heart. She could not bear to leave, and probably she was too grief-stricken to withdraw at this time. "As she wept she stooped and looked into the tomb." Wip-

ing her tears she ventures one glance into the empty tomb. Just as many a grief-stricken one has in vain sought relief from sorrow at a bier or some familiar spot.

v. 12. "She beholdeth two angels." The original Greek indicates that by steadfastly gazing she saw there two angels, in white, one at the head and one at the feet, thus marking the place where the Lord had lain.

v. 13. "Woman, why weepest thou?" This question was not simply an inquiry but was intended to arouse Mary to the futility of her tears. Possibly the angels intended it as comfort. "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Mary seems to be alone at this time, for no longer does she use the plural "we," but the singular "I." She is the most faithful, if not the most grief-stricken mourner, and in isolation sobs out her sorrow.

v. 14. "She turneth herself and beholdeth Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus." There must have been something in His resurrected body which was different from His body before His crucifixion, else Mary would have known Him. Her not recognizing Him could hardly be explained by the fact that she was grief-stricken. Certainly His deity must have shown forth from His celestial body as it never could have done in His terrestrial body.

v. 15. "Woman, why weepest thou?" This question had been asked her before by the angels, but this time it comes from lips that had pronounced blessings and given instructions to her on many occasions before. "Supposing him to be the gardener." These words make it clear that she had no intimation that she was talking with the risen Lord. She fancied that she was addressing a servant of Joseph of Arimathea, and of course that he would be friendly to her. And who but the gardener would be likely to be there so early? "If thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." One writer states that she thought that they were unwilling to have the honorable sepulchre used by him longer, and that possibly they had thrown him into the shameful common grave used for men stoned and crucified. Mary would have been glad to recover the body and give it a permanent grave.

v. 16. "Jesus saith unto her, *Mary.*" Though she had not recognized Him up to this time, when after a moment's pause "He spake her name in those well-remembered accents that had first unbound her from seven-fold demonized power, and called her into a new life," she recognized Him.

"Rabboni, which is to say, *Master.*" Rabboni is probably Galilean, and by this term she had customarily addressed the Lord.

v. 17. "Touch me not." As Matthew 28 : 9 records, Mary probably had taken hold of His feet, as though to be sure that He was not a phantom, and while so doing would recognize the nail prints as she worshipped Him. But Jesus was not ready for the touch of love and worship, for He had not yet ascended to His Father. He had something more important for Mary to do at this time, even than to revere Him. *"Go unto my brethren."* The Master was eager that His disciples know that He was risen. And so He sent her forth to them with the glad news.

V. *Mary tells the Disciples.*

v. 18. "Mary Magdalene cometh and telleth the disciples." Mary was not simply a devoted worshipper and a loving friend, but a faithful servant, and so with quick step she hastened to tell the disciples, not simply that the tomb was empty, but the greater marvel that she had communed with the risen Lord. Since that day a host of ambassadors have gone forth to tell of the fact of the risen Lord. *"I have seen the Lord."* She spoke with an assurance born out of experience. No one could persuade her that she had been deceived, for not only had she heard Him say, "Mary," but she had actually touched Him and been commanded by Him as of old to carry out His wishes.

§ 144. The Report of the Watch. Mat. 28: 11-15.

After Mary Magdalene had told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, then some of the guard came to the city and made known to the chief priests what had happened. After they had taken counsel with the elders they gave to the soldiers large sums of money, instructing them to say, "His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept."

It is quite clear that when the Jewish leaders did this, they made the soldiers liable to death, because had this occurred, it would have been a case of neglect of duty on the part of the watch. But the chief priests and elders assured the soldiers that if they would only make this false statement, they would see to it that the governor would clear them. So the soldiers took the money and did as they were asked, and hence there went abroad the saying among the Jews that the body of Jesus was stolen from the tomb while the soldiers slept. But though the Jews have been deluded with this falsehood down through the centuries, the Church has ample proof that Christ really has risen from the grave.

Peloubet shows by a well-arranged chart with Scripture citations, that Christ appeared eleven times after His resurrection:

1. To Mary Magdalene. Mark 6:9; John 20:11-18.
2. To the women returning from the sepulchre. Mat. 28:9, 10.
3. To Simon Peter alone. Luke 24:34.
4. To two disciples going to Emmaus. Luke 24:13-31.
5. To the apostles excepting Thomas. John 20:19-25.
6. To the apostles, Thomas being present. John 20:26-29.
7. To the seven disciples fishing. John 21:1-13.
8. To the eleven disciples on a mountain. Mat. 28:16-18.
9. To 500 brethren. 1 Cor. 15:6.
10. To James only. 1 Cor. 15:7.
11. To all the apostles at the Ascension. Luke 24:50, 51.

These different appearings covered the period of time from Sunday, April 9th, early in the morning, until Thursday, May the 18th, and they were near the sepulchre and Jerusalem, in Galilee, and on the Mount of Olives.

§ 145. The Walk to Emmaus. Mark 16:12, 13; Luke 24:13-35.

In the immediate context of our Scripture lesson, Luke records how that Jesus met the two disciples between Jerusalem and Emmaus, and how that finding them disconsolate

and disappointed because Jesus had been crucified, He reproved them for their slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken. Then beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He explained to them from the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. He abode with them, sitting down with them to meat and breaking and blessing bread. Then when they knew Him, He vanished out of their sight. Then they commented as to how their hearts had been strangely warmed as they had communed with Him on the way. Then they hastened off to Jerusalem to tell the eleven of the wonderful experiences they had had with the risen Lord.

From this narrative we glean that if we would understand the things of our Lord, it is not enough for us to simply be attached to Him and be grief-stricken at what might seem to be His loss, neither is it sufficient that we know the Scriptures that speak of Him. But our eyes must be opened in order that we might understand the meaning of these inspired words. Then we see here also, that just as these two disciples did not come to recognize Him until they had caused Him to accept their hospitality, so we will never understand Him until we have welcomed Him and communed with Him as they did, in the breaking of bread.

§ 146. The Appearance to the Disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas Being Absent. Mark 16: 14; Luke 24: 36-43; John 20: 19-25.

Luke 24: 36. "As they spake these things." The two whom He met on the way to Emmaus are referred to, one of whom was possibly Luke. "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them." Since the doors were shut for fear of the Jews (John 20: 20) His appearing would naturally be mysterious to them.

This raises the question as to what kind of a body Jesus had subsequent to His resurrection. Three views are held:

First: That He had the same glorified body as He had after His ascension, and the same as our spiritual bodies will be after our resurrection. 1 Cor. 15: 42-53 and Rev. 1: 13-16 would seem to contradict this view. This would

hardly be possible, in view of the fact that He ate after His resurrection and before His ascension.

Second: That He had a body of the same substance as that before the crucifixion, but having new properties and powers. This view might mar the proof of His resurrection. True it is that Jesus' body was invisible and could be transported easily after His resurrection, but these new powers could easily be attributed to the power of Jesus' spirit over His body.

Third: That Jesus had a body of the same substance and attributes as that before His crucifixion, and this body was changed into the glorious body at the Ascension. This latter view seems the more likely.

"Peace be unto you." Jesus so addressed them that they might not be terrified at His presence. Doubtless they needed His salutation of peace at this time. The fear of the Jews was so upon them that their door was constantly fastened. Then, their Friend and Teacher had been taken from them. What a peace must have come to them when they realized His presence in their very midst.

v. 37. "But they were terrified," etc. The mysterious power manifested in their midst naturally terrified them. That the disciples were convinced that Jesus had risen, even though His first appearance frightened them, it is easy for us to believe. The risen Christ did not meet credulous friends, eager to accept rumors of His resurrection, but He met real men who were normally affected by His surprising them on this occasion. And so He convinced them, even against their wills and anticipations.

v. 38. "Why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" "Thoughts" were references to questionings or anxious reasonings. Jesus doubtless referred to their hesitancy to believe. Surely they remembered some of His Words spoken previous to His death, and they were turning them over in their minds, and hence "He upbraided them for their unbelief." Jesus intimated that they should have been looking for Him, instead of being huddled together with doors bolted and fearful hearts.

v. 39. "Behold my hands and my feet." The marks of the nails were there to be seen. Christ will demonstrate to

them, since they will not believe Him. "Handle me and see." He did not ask them simply to trust their sight, but He bade them touch Him and thus be doubly convinced. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones." They evidently imagined that He was a spectre, but by appealing to three senses—sight, touch and hearing—Jesus reassured them that He was more than spirit. Incidentally we note that Jesus here stated that a spirit has independent existence.

v. 41. "While they yet believed not for joy." This is as we say "too good to be true." "Have ye any meat?" Having let them hear Him and see Him, as well as touch Him, Jesus would now convince them that He was the same Jesus with the same body that they had known, by partaking of food in their presence.

v. 42. "A piece of broiled fish." Likely a small piece of fish was left after the evening meal, and this Jesus ate before them. In a later appearing to the seven fishing (John 21:1-13), Jesus again ate fish.

The early Christians regarded the fish as a mystic symbol of the Christ. The five Greek letters that spelled the word (i, ch, th, u, s) being the initials for Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour. The Roman Catholic custom of eating fish only on their fast day is likely connected with this early Christian notion.

§ 147. The Appearance to Thomas With the Other Disciples. John 20: 26-29.

One week before this, Jesus had appeared to His disciples, Thomas being absent. Now again, "After eight days" . . . "Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." When the fellow-disciples of Thomas had reported to him the first appearing of Jesus to them, he had been sceptical. He had demanded sensuous evidence of the risen Christ (Jno. 20:25).

Therefore, when Jesus appeared "into the midst," He challenged Thomas to "Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach thy hand, and put it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas had emphasized his doubts in strong terms: "Except I see . . . I will not

believe, never." Jesus challenges his sense of fairness, offers to demonstrate to him. Said He, "Reach hither . . . and become not *apistos* but *pistos.*" "Unbelieving" and "believing" corerspond to *"apistos"* and *"pistos."* The two words suggest antitheses. Jesus gave Thomas opportunity to line up with the "sons of Abraham." And Thomas embraced the opportunity. There is no evidence that he did reach to touch the wounds of the Master. He saw; he heard; he was convinced. Then he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God," "The fullest confession thus hitherto made"; "Lord," *kyrios,* signifies "one who possesses and disposes of another."

Jesus had accommodated Himself to the doubts of Thomas, so he reminded him and all of his temperament that "Because thou hast seen [me], thou hast believed." Then was uttered, "This last and greatest of the Beatiudes . . . the peculiar heritage of the later Church" (Westcot), "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Dr. A. B. Bruce in "The Training of the Twelve," comments on Thomas' absence from the former meeting to which Jesus appeared as follows, "In his melancholy humor he may simply have been indulging himself in the luxury of solitary sadness, just as some whose Christ is dead do now spend their Sabbaths at home or in rural solitudes, shunning the offensive cheerfulness or the drowsy dullness of social worship." But if Thomas did stumble over the miraculous, surely he did not fall, much less, permit his rationalism to keep him down and away from enjoying the fellowship of faith. It was in this atmosphere of belief that he saw and hailed his Lord.

Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, the celebrated Semitic scholar of Princeton, said once in the writer's hearing that he had been a "Doubting Thomas" but determined to find out for himself. So he devoted himself to the study of Semitics, and then the records. He is today a staunch defender of the faith and, needless to say, a recognized authority on the Old Testament.

Doubt is negative and willful: doubt is destructive; but the honest doubter may be, by his very doubts, stimulated to seek truth and light. As Tennyson wrote:

"There lies more faith in honest doubt
Believe me than in half the creeds."

Of course, the happiest moment in the life of Thomas was when he in ecstasy, said, "My Lord and my God." That was "Eureka" to him.

§ 148. The Appearance to the Seven Disciples by the Sea of Galilee. John 21: 1-24.

We here have a striking account of one of the appearances of Christ to His disciples. Only seven were present and but five of these are named. It has been conjectured that these probably lived near the Sea of Galilee or Tiberias. If this is so, then Peter's old haunts brought him back to his former habits and he proposes to go a-fishing. The others accompany him, but they fish in vain all night. While the shadows were still hanging over the sands of the shore an unknown figure appears on the beach inquiring, "Childern, have ye aught to eat?" To the answer "no," he instructs them to "cast the net on the right side of the boat." The verse continues, "They cast therefore," and now they are not able to draw in for the multitude of fishes. Could this not have reminded the disciples of that other miraculous draught of fishes which they caught at the words of the Master as they had toiled all night and taken nothing (Luke 5: 1-11). John, "that disciple whom Jesus loved," was first to detect that the one on the shore was the Master. Simon Peter believed John, reverently, threw his fisherman's coat around him and cast himself into the sea. This was in order that he, who was so accustomed to giving way to excess of feeling, might the sooner be in the presence of his Lord. But Peter's six companions soon followed him, hauling in a net full of great fishes, a hundred fifty and three. Upon landing, the disciples were evidently surprised to find a fire with fish and bread placed there by other hands than their own. Then at Jesus' words Peter draws in the net containing the large catch. With Him they broke their fast without asking, "Who art thou?" The Master distributes to them the food.

This was the third time that Jesus was manifest to His

disciples. How unexpected must this all have been to the seven! Such an unheard of "catch"! Such a miraculous breakfast amid such rare fellowship! But the most illuminating part of this incident is Jesus' dialogue with Peter following the meal. Jesus waited until the meal was over so as not to embarrass Peter. Jesus knew that Peter remembered his thrice denial of his Lord (Luke 22:61-62). This denial on the part of Peter, the leader of the apostles, needed to be reckoned for. We observe how Jesus uses the old name "Simon."

Peter's rock characteristics were not yet in evidence. One has said that the expression, "Son of Jonas," would remind Peter of his mean extraction.

Both Mat. 26:69-75 and Luke 22:54-62 record Peter's threefold denial. Matthew relates that Peter used an oath and Luke records the Lord's melting look. In the expression, "Lovest thou me more than these," there has been much conjecture as to what *these* refers to. Could it be his friends, the fishermen? Did he prefer Christ to his fellow craftsmen? He had just gone back to his fishing. Why did he do this?

This suggestion overlaps that of his boats and nets and even his fishes. Could it be that Peter cares more for the profit and pleasure of his business than for the Master? Did he with Paul say, "But what things were gains to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3:7).

Then there is a possibility that "these" refers to these other disciples and the question might be asked as to whether Peter loves Christ more than these others love Him. True Peter had said, "I will lay down my life for thy sake." John 13:37. Yet John had outdone him in faithfulness at the cross. Jno. 19:26. Peter the spokesman should have been there. Then by this question, "Lovest thou me more than these," Christ may have been reminding Peter that he had greater reasons for loving Him. Luke 7:41-42. For had not Peter been forgiven much, and the woman who had come first to the empty sepulchre were bidden to "tell his disciples and Peter." Mark 16:7. This including of Peter must have been re-assuring to him.

It is easy to observe that we have the threefold question

and the threefold reply. "Lovest thou me" came to Peter's ears thrice. How this must have recalled any duties that had been left undone! How these questions must have provoked to desires of faithful service! How they must have encouraged Peter that it was possible for him to recover himself fully!

Jesus twice uses the verb *agapas.* This word, says Trench, suggests a more reasoning attachment. To love in this sense calls for inward strength rather than an expression of feeling, in the words of Eidersheim. Peter in each of his replies uses the verb *fileo* which refers to a more instinctive love, which is rather of the feelings or natural affections and implies more passion. The Lord knows that Peter lacks no warmth of natural affection, especially at times. He would cut off Malcus' ear for Jesus' sake; he attempted to walk on the water to Jesus; he wept bitterly when Jesus looked at him after his denial; but the Master doubts whether Peter's love would "give account of itself to itself." —*Trench.* The lesson is clear. Are we simply followers of Christ because of some beauty we have discovered in Him or some gift He has bestowed upon us? Do we imagine that some extravagant act, some complimentary epithet will discharge our obligation to Him, or are we giving to Him a love life? Is our love profuse today and passive tomorrow, or is it profound and persistent? Does our love need to be coaxed, primed, petted and pampered or is it like a mother's, tried and true?

Jesus in the last question adopts Peter's own word for *love,* as though He wanted Peter to carefully consider if he could maintain that type of love.

As we have suggested, the threefold question was evidently asked of Peter because of what he was. Jesus threw the searchlight thrice on his impulsive follower. It was a divine X-ray three times applied. It was a triplicate diagnosis by the Heavenly Physician. So the examination was personal, pointed and doubtless painful.

Peter's impetuosity, his impulsiveness was pronounced. Peter had "personality." Did not Jesus suggest, "Peter, if you love Me, there must be a lessening of this colorful personality and an increasing of what I want"? That this

was realized we learn from a study of his epistles. 1 Peter 1 : 13, 2 : 13, 3 : 1, and the Golden Series Section, 2 Peter 1.

Then Peter was prone to interfere in the affairs of others. This amounted to impertinence. He was concerned about "What shall this man do?" Surely the church is in need of samples of grace as well as ruling elders. Many a busy servant of the Lord could well say in the words of Solomon, "My own vineyard I have not kept." The Lord does not so much want sycophants or professors in vocational guidance as He does soldiers, servants, examples. Then as verse 18 suggests, Peter's life was soon to be interrupted by death and the Lord was recommissioning Peter for a successful ministry. He was expecting His servant to ripen and mellow so that when plucked he would be luscious and sweet to the Lord.

When Peter answered the Lord's interrogation, the reply always was "feed." Once the word "tend" was used, which includes the feeding. The lambs and the sheep must be cared for in the absence of the Good Shepherd and Jesus stresses the feeding of the sheep rather than the direction of the shepherds.

Cook has said, "The foundation of the apostle was his love." Faith worketh by love and the truth is spoken in love. Then Jesus in each instance uses the first person possessive personal pronoun "My." Thus he implies these are *My* sheep and in order to feed them you must love Me. Augustine says, "So love me, not thinking to feed yourselves but my sheep inasmuch as they are mine; since they are not yours seek my glory in them and not your power."

§ 149. The Appearance to the Eleven on a Mountain in Galilee. Mat. 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 15-18.

Section 148 records how that Jesus again called His disciples from their fishing. It appears evident that when the Shepherd had been smitten, the sheep scattered. The Apostolic group or College was broken up on that fateful night of betrayal and arrest. Peter "followed afar off" and denied his Lord with an oath. No mention is made of the apostles standing solidly together. True it is that they met in Jeru-

salem together, behind closed doors, "for fear of the Jews" (Jno. 20:19). Their past associations and slumbering hopes kept them united (Jno. 20:26). But doubts filled their minds (Luke 24:13-35). Jesus bade them "See . . . handle," etc. (Luke 24:39, 40; Jno. 20:20). Were they not all "Doubting Thomases"? The Ten had advantage over him only in the fact that they were present at that initial appearance. Thomas though a little behind was as ready to believe *on evidence.*

But regardless of their faith in Him, in His resurrection even, surely we can understand how the disciples were puzzled as to Christ's program. Was it in this time of uncertainty, of wondering just what they should do, since Jesus had gone to the cross rather than to His crown, that Peter, ever restless and active, said, "I go a fishing"? At any rate six of his fellows said, "We also come with thee." But their fishing was futile. To His question, "Have ye aught to eat, Children?" their answer was, "No." But Jesus instructed them to so cast the net as to get "the multitude of fishes." Then in the fellowship of plenty and success they dined together.

After that memorable breakfast, when the risen Christ communed with His disciples, the Lord by a thrice uttered question sounded out Peter's love for Himself. It was the Master versus "These" (Jno. 21:15). Then the "Great Shepherd of the sheep" is thinking of the flock. So He advises, "Feed my lambs," "Tend my sheep," "Feed my sheep." Then He points to the martyr's crown for His servant.

Does this not all savor of a recommissioning; does it not sound like a recalling of the leader of the disciples?

And since this was necessary, we understand how it could be said, "And when they saw him they worshipped: *but some doubted*" (Mat. 28:17). Doubt was the outcome of disappointment at the apparent miscarriage of Jesus' plans for setting up a kingdom.

So the Master appointed a mountain as a suitable meeting place with them for a final authorization (Mat. 28:16). Geikie believes that this is the occasion when "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. 15:6).

This seems in keeping with "but some doubted," since the eleven had all been convinced of His resurrection before this. (See Sections 146, 147, 148.) If this is not true then the apostles at that time were unstable beyond reason or imagination.

But this appearance was accompanied by "The Great Commission," called by the Duke of Wellington "The Church's Marching Orders." To their risen Lord had been given "all authority." He, thus possessed of this authority, bade them "Go . . . and make disciples of all the nations," etc. They were authorized to "Go," act; they were to enroll as disciples by baptism; they were to teach their disciples, Christ's disciples, "to observe all things whatsoever I commanded" said the Master. But they were assured of His presence: "Lo, I am with you all the days," etc.

The important verb here, judging from the grammatical construction, is *"make disciples."* This is the Imperative. He said in fact, in order to "make disciples" of all the nations, "Go ye into all the world" (Mark 16:15); then discipleship is declared by a baptism which recognizes the Trinity—Jehovah, Christ the "only begotten God," and the Holy Spirit; then these disciples, so made, are to be instructed aright; and in such service I am ever present.

Mark emphasizes the fact that faith in the Gospel is the touchstone of salvation (16:16). He also states that miraculous power accompanies Gospel preaching.

§ 150. Christ's Final Appearance, and His Ascension. Mark 16: 19, 20; Luke 24: 44-53.

Once again the eleven are in Jerusalem. Forty days have passed since His resurrection. He is in their midst. He reminds them of His being the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Himself in Moses, the prophets and the psalms. He opens their minds to understand the Scriptures, and points out the importance of His passion and resurrection. He uges the preaching of repentance and remission of sins "unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Then He reminds them of their responsibility as witnesses. The promise of power is reiterated and the necessity of tarrying in Jerusalem urged.

From Bethany, whence He went to His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, the Master was about to take His departure from earth and His disciples. So He led them thither.

There was the final visible lifting up of those nail-pierced hands and the farewell blessing. His last act was that of blessing for as He was so doing "He parted from them and was carried up into heaven." They worshipped Him as He ascended and were hushed at His separation from them.

He went to heaven itself; they back to Jerusalem "with great joy" despite His absence, where the temple's significance was even more manifest. There they remained "blessing God." He had gone to sit down at God's right hand; they to tarry and then preach and witness by signs. They "carried on" in His stead.

§ 151. The Conclusion of John's Gospel. John 20: 30, 31; John 21: 25.

John selected from the many, many miracles of our Lord only those that would best serve his purpose. He was bent upon convincing those to whom he wrote "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." But John was not writing simply to convince the intellect, but to mightily move the will, warm the heart and so save the soul. "And that believing ye may have life in his name" expresses the blessed results of faith.

So many "signs," which Jesus did, are actually recorded that the wonder of His power causes us to marvel when we read, "Many other *signs* therefore did Jesus."

We are persuaded that John's enthusiasm knew no bounds when he wrote, "If they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written."

INDEX

	Page
Abomination of Desolation	301
Adultery	
Woman taken in	228
Age, End of	298
Alabaster box	165
Alexander	41
Almsgiving	153
Altruism	151
Ambition	
Of James and John	276
Angels	29
Annas	78
Annas	326
Annunciation	
To Mary	21
To Joseph	23
Anointing	
Of Jesus	164
Of Jesus	279
Antichrist	301
Antiochus Epiphanes	2
Antipater	41
Apollinaris	72
Appearings of Christ	355
Thomas absent	356
Thomas present	358
To Seven	360
To Eleven	363
Christ's farewell	365
Archelaus	41
Arian	120
Aristobulus	41
Arius	72
Arrest of Jesus	326
Ascension	365
Athanasius	72
Authority	
Christ's challenged	284
Baptism	82
Of Jesus	59
Baptizing, Christ	84
Beatitudes	135
Bethabara	70
Bethesda	117
Betrayal of Jesus	326
Bibliolatry	121
"Bind"	217
Birth	
Of Jesus	28
Of John	27
The Second	81
Blind	
Men, Two	197
Man near Bethsaida	215
Man near Jericho	277
Bread of Life	206
Brotherhood	151, 165
Burial of Jesus	342
Cæsar, Augustus	41
Caiaphas	55, 268, 327
Call	
Of Four	100
Of Matthew	113
Cana	70
Capernaum	73, 95, 98, 100, 102
Centurion's Servant	155
Chief Priests	228
And Judas	307
Childhood of Jesus	42
Children	
Christ blessing	273
Choosing the Twelve	132
Cicero	53, 54
Circumcision of Jesus	31
Cleansing of Temple	
First	77
Second	282
Confession	162
Peter's	215
Cost, Counting	261
Cross	336
Crucifixion	337
Christ foretells	276
Cursing the Fig Tree	282
Cyril	72
Death	
Christ foretells His	218, 220
Decalogue	144
Dedication, Feast of	244
Deity of Christ	274
Demoniacs	
Gadarene	192
Boy	220

	Page
Demons	102
Dumb	197
Divorce	146, 272
Dragnet, Parable of	186
Eating with Unwashed Hands	207
Ebal, Mount	87
Elisabeth	
Mary's visit to	25
Emmaus	355
Ephraim	268
Epicurean	162
Epiphanes, Antiochus	2
Eternal sin	169
Eternal (æon)	305
Ethics	145, 146
Eutychus	72
Externalism	214, 294
Faithfulness	198
Fame of Christ	131
Fasting	116, 154
Feast	
Of Dedication	244
Fig Tree	252, 282, 284
Five Thousand Fed	203
Flight into Egypt	39
Forgiveness	221
Funeral	158
Gabriel	70
Galilean Ministry	95
"Galilean Fool"	42
Galileans	
Slain by Pilate	251
Galilee	42, 70, 106
Sea of, in storm	189
Final Departure from	237
Genealogies	12
Gentiles Seek Jesus	296
Gerizim, Mount	87
Gethsemane	320
Gods	246
Healing	
Peter's Wife's mother	104
Exegesis of, Matt. 8: 17	105
Man with withered hand	124
Centurion's servant	155, 157
Blind man near Bethsaida	215
Man born blind	241
Miracles of	213
Woman on Sabbath	253
Herod	
Rise of	4
Works of	5
Cruelty of	5
Death of	40
Idumean	85
Antipas	160, 203, 257
Feast of	203
Reply to warning against	257
Herodias	203
Holy Ghost	223
Received	227
Huguenots	181
Humility	221
Huss	102
Immortality	158
Infirm Man	117
Jairus' Daughter	
Raising of	194
James, Ambition of	276
Janni, Rabbi	44
Jericho	
Blind man near	277
Jerusalem, Destruction of	298
Jese, Rabbi	43
John	
Ambition of	276
Goes to Tomb	351
John, the Baptist	
Birth promised	17
Ministry of	53, 121
Testimony of	86
Disciples of	116
Last Message of	160
Jesus' estimate of	162
Death of	202
John's Prologue	9
Jonah	171
Joseph	
Of Arimathea	81
Jesus' foster-father	23
Josephus	78
Judaism	232
Judas	
Conspires	307
Judea	42
Judgment	260
Kethubah	71
Kindred of Christ, True	172
Kingdom	
Coming of	269
Knox	102
Korban	209

	Page
Lamb of God	66
Lazarus	
Parable	264
Raising of	265
Leaven, Parable	182
Lepers	
Ten	268
Leprosy	108
Light of the World	230
"Loose"	217
Luke	14
His preface	13
Luther	102
Lydda	43
Maccabees	3, 203
Judas	244
Magdalene, Mary	168, 169
At Tomb	350
Magi	36
Mary	
Of Bethany	239, 279
Mother of Lord	21
Marriage	70
Martha	239
Materialism	214
Messiah	225
Michael	70
Miarcles	
The First	69
Natural with Christ	80
Not to His liking	106
Encourage John	161
Sympathetic	266
Mishna	44, 122, 207, 208
Mites, Widow's	295
Mustard Seed	
Parable of	182
Nathanael	68
Nazarene	42
Nazareth	70
Rejection at	198
Childhood at	42
Eighteen years at	48
Nazarites	
Self-control of	19
Needle's eye	275
Nestorius	72
Nicodemus	
Rebuked	43
Estimate of	80
Defense of	228
Nineveh	171
Ninevites	171

	Page
Nobleman's Son	95
Nonresistance	
Applied to individuals	148
Example of—Thurgood	150
Oaths	146
Opportunist	
Pilate	328
Ordinances	
Their binding character	208
Papini	
Description of temple scene	78
Description of Christ, the traveler	99
Description of "Four"	101
Parables	173
Sower	175
Tares	177
Mustard Seed	182
Leaven	182
Hid Treasure	184
The Pearl	185
Dragnet	186
Three of Grace	261
Prodigal Son	261
Lost Sheep	261
Lost Coin	261
Of Unjust Steward	263
Rich Man and Lazarus	263
Lord's use of	298
Paralytic	
Borne of four	110
Passover	
Boy Jesus at	46
Time of Feast	222
Last	309
Pearl, Parable of	185
Pentecost	
One of three great feasts	46
Time of	222
Perfect	
Meaning of	152
Peter	215, 218, 220
His Confession	215
Goes to Tomb	351
Pharisees	
Oppose Jesus	86
Haunt Jesus	115
Fasting of	117
Exactions of	122, 144
Hampered	124
Tithing	215
Prejudiced	224
Contempt of	228, 229

	Page
Blind guides	243
Not shepherds	243
Discourse against	248
Solicitous of Christ	257
Represented	263
Desperation of	268
Hounding Jesus	269
Discourse at table of	259
And Publican	271
Woes against	290, 293
Philo	10
Philip	68
Phylacteries	291
Pilate	327, 328
His wife	329
Plucking Grain	122
Prayer	
Private	153
Effectual	222
Discourse on	247
Intercessory	318
Preacher	97
Presentation	32
Prologue	
Of John's Gospel	9
Publican	113
Pharisee and	271
"Queen of the South"	171
Question, Christ's unanswerable	289
Rabbis	
Contrasted with Christ	109
Influence of	110
Conservatism of	112
Casuistry of	146
Customs of	164
Rabbinism	115, 180, 208
Rapture	270
Rejection at Nazareth	96
"Remit"	217
Renan	78
Resurrection	
Foretold	218, 220
Morning	349
"Retain"	217
Return to Nazareth	39
Rich Man	264
Young ruler	274
Sabbath	
Woman healed on	253
Sabbath-keeping	
Exactions	119
Two evident objects	122
Sadducees	
Belief of	215
Salome	41
Salutations	292
Samaritan, Good	238
Samaritans	87
Sanhedrists	328
Sanctification	
Being "perfect"	152
Satan	178
Saved, Few	256
Security of saints	245
Seneca	54
Septuagint	1
Sepulchres, White	294
Watch at	344
Sermon on Mount	133
Servant	
"Of Jehovah"	131
Seventy	
Mission of	238
Shekel in Fish's Mouth	220
Shepherds	
At Jesus' birth	29
"The Good Shepherd"	243
Shunem	159
Sifting	207
Sign from Heaven	214
Sign of His Coming	303
Simon	
The Pharisee	164
Simpson, A. B.	
His appreciation of Luke	14
His tradition on Babel	38
A "Light"	102
Sin	
Eternal	169
Unpardonable	169
Socrates	
Greatness	42
And Sophists	97
Soldiers	329
Son of Man	132
Sophists	97
Sower, Parable of	175
Supper, Last	309
Synagogue	96, 253
Syrophœnician Woman	213
Tabernacles, Feast	46, 222, 227
Tacitus	54
Talmud	122, 134
Tares, Parable of	177
Taxation	113

	Page
To Cæsar or not	288
Temple	
Wonder of	299
Presentation in	32
First Cleansing of	77
Temptation	
Of Jesus	60
Testimony	
John's	86
Theophilus	15
Thurgood, Rev. Charles	150
Tiberius	55
Tithing	
Pharisees	294
Traditionalism	207, 226, 243
Transfiguration, The	219
Treasure, Hid	
Parable of	184
Tribulation, Great	301
Tribute	288
Triumphal Entry	280
Twelve	
Mission of the	201
Vine	307
Vipers	295
Visit to Temple	46
Walking on the Water	204
Watch at Sepulchre	344
Report of	354
Wedding, Jewish	70
Wesley, John	102
Whitefield	102
Widow's Mites	295
Widow's Son Raised	158
Williams, Roger	181
Wine, Water made	69
Wise Men	36
Withered Hand	124
Woes of Jesus	290, 293
Woman of Samaria	87
"Word," John's	9
World of John's day	53
World, End of	298
Wycliffe	102
Zacchæus	
Visit to	278
Zarephath	98

Index of Passages of Scripture

Passage	Page
MATTHEW	
1: 1-17	16
18-25	23
2: 1-12	36
13-23	39
23	42
3: 1-12	53
13-17	59
4: 1-11	60
12	86
12 (13-16), 17	95
13-16	98
23	106
23-25	131
5: 1-48	133
6: 1-34	133
7: 1-29	133
8: 1-4	106
5-13	155
14-17	102
18	189, 237
19-22	237
23-27	189
28-34	192
9: 1-8	110
9-13	113
14-17	116
18-26	194
27-34	197
35	201
36-38	201
10: 1-42	201
2-4	132
11: 1	201
2-30	160
12: 1-8	122
9-14	124
15-21	131
22-45	169
46-50	172
13: 1-53	173
54-58	198
14: 1-12	202
13-23	203
24-36	204
15: 1-20	207
21-28	213
29-31	213
32-38	214
39	214
16: 1-12	214
13-20	215
21-28	218
17: 1-13	219
14-20	220
22, 23	220
24-27	220
18: 1-35	221
19: 1, 2	237
3-12	271
13-15	273
16-30	274
20: 1-16	274
17-19	276
20-28	276
29-34	277
21: 1-11	280
12-17	282
18, 19-22	282
20-22	284
23-27	284
28-46	285
22: 1-14	285
15-40	287
41-46	289
23: 1-39	290
24: 1-51	298
25: 1-46	298
26: 1, 2	298
1-5	307
6-13	279
14-16	307
17-30	309
31-35	314
36-46	320
47-56	326
57-75	326
27: 1-10	326
11-31	327
32-56	336
57-61	342
62-66	344
28: 1-10	349
11-15	354
16-20	363
MARK	
1: 1-8	53
9-11	59

Passage	Page
1:12, 13	60
14	86
14, 15	95
16-20	100
21-34	102
35-45	106
2:1-12	110
13-17	113
18-22	116
23-28	122
3:1-6	124
7-12	131
13-19	132
20-30	169
31-35	172
4:1-34	173
35-41	189
5:1-20	192
21-43	194
6:1-6	198
7-13	201
14-29	202
30-46	203
47-56	204
7:1-23	207
24-30	213
31-37	213
8:1-9	214
10-21	214
22-26	215
27-30	215
31-38	218
9:1	218
2-13	219
14-29	220
30-32	220
33-50	221
10:1	237
2-12	271
13-16	273
17-31	274
32-34	276
35-45	276
46-52	277
11:1-11	280
12-14	282
15-19	282
20-25	284
27-33	284
12:1-12	285
13-34	287
35-37	289
38-40	290
41-44	295
13:1-37	298
14:1, 2	307
3-9	279
10, 11	307
12-26	309
27-31	314
32-42	320
43-52	326
53-72	326
15:1-20	327
21-41	336
42-47	342
16:1-11	349
12, 13	355
14	356
15-18	363
19, 20	365

LUKE

1:1-4	13
5-25	17
26-38	21
39-56	25
57-80	27
2:1-7	28
8-20	29
21	31
22-39	32
39, 40	42
41-50	46
51, 52	48
3:1-20	53
21, 22 (23a)	59
23-38	16
4:1-13	60
14, 15	95
16-30	96
31a	98
31-41	102
5:1-11	106
12-16	106
17-26	110
27-32	113
33-39	116
6:1-5	122
6-11	124
12-19	132
17-19	131
20-49	133
7:1-10	155
11-17	158
18-35	160
36-50	164
8:1-3	167
4-18	173

Passage	Page
8:19-21	172
22-25	189
26-39	192
40-56	194
9:1-6	201
7-9	202
10-17	203
18-21	215
22-27	218
28-36	219
37-43a	220
43b-45	220
46-50	221
51-62	237
10:1-24	238
25-27	238
38-42	239
11:1-13	247
14-54	248
12:1-59	248
13:1-9	251
10-21	253
23-30	256
31-35	257
14:1-24	259
25-35	261
15:1-32	261
16:1-31	263
17:1-10	265
11-19	268
20-37	269
18:1-8	269
9-14	271
15-17	273
18-30	274
31-34	276
35-43	277
19:1-10	278
11-28	278
29-44	280
45-48	282
20:1-8	284
9-19	285
20-40	287
41-44	289
45-47	290
21:1-4	295
5-38	298
22:1-6	307
7-30	309
31-38	314
39-46	320
47-53	326
54-71	326
23:1-25	327
26-49	336
50-56a	342
56b	349
24:1-12	349
13-35	355
36-43	356
44-53	365

JOHN

1:1-18	9
19-28	65
29-34	66
35-42	67
43-51	68
2:1-11	69
12	73
13-22	77
23-3:21	79
3:22-24	84
25-36	86
4:1-3	86
4-26	87
27-42	90
43-45	95
46-54	95
5:1-47	117
6:1-15	203
16-21	204
22-71	206
7:1-52	222
53	228
8:1-11	228
12-30	230
31-59	233
9:1-41	241
10:1-21	243
22-42	244
11:1-46	265
47-54	268
55-57	279
12:1-11	279
12-19	280
20-36	296
37-50	297
13:1-30	309
31-38	314
14:1-31	314
15:1-27	314
16:1-33	314
17:1-26	318
18:1-11	326
12-27	326
28-40	327
19:1-16a	327

Passage	Page
19: 16b-37	336
38-42	342
20: 1-18	349
19-25	356
20: 26-29	358
30, 31	366
21: 1-24	360
25	366

DATE DUE

BT 301 .C25 1926
Cable, John Henry, 1883-
Christ in the four Gospels

UNITED THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY LIBRARY

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BT301.C25 1926
Cable, John H Christ in the four Gospels
3 0645 0004 8851 6